AMERICAN FAMILIES

PAUL C. GLICK

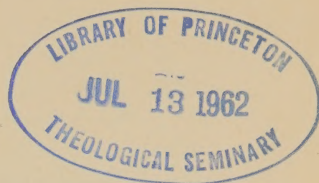A VOLUME IN THE CENSUS MONOGRAPH SERIES

AMERICAN
FAMILIES

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by

PAUL C. GLICK

U. S. Bureau of the Census

for the

SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL

in cooperation with the

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE

BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

FOREWORD

The statistical results compiled by the Bureau of the Census constitute a tremendous mass of detailed information about the population of the United States and its characteristics and economic activities. To meet the requirements of government agencies, business concerns, and investigators of social problems and to satisfy the needs of individual citizens, facts must be gathered and published, showing the distribution of the population in each large and small political unit with respect to age, sex, color, marital status, occupation, income, education, national origin, and other characteristics. This information provides the basis for apportionment of representatives in Congress, for answering many questions by direct reference, and for formulating many plans, at least in preliminary form.

It is the first business of the Bureau of the Census to put into print the census results that directly answer as many such questions as possible. Along with these results, similar data from one or two previous censuses are usually included. Limitations of time, space, and money prevent any extensive statement of the relations between particular results, the long-term trends of significant totals and subtotals, the shifting proportions of the people belonging to different categories, various interesting and important relations such as those between income, occupation, and age. It is not that the Bureau of the Census fails in any sense to appreciate the value and need for such analyses, but rather that it must concentrate on its basic concern with the summary statistics that constitute its unique contribution to knowledge.

When plans for the 1950 Census were made, the need for more extensive analysis was recognized and a series of census monographs similar to those issued after the 1920 Census was proposed. Because of the pressures caused by the depression in the early 1930's and by defense and war in the early 1940's, plans for monographs based on those censuses could not be carried out. Late in the 1940's interested persons from business, research, and government agencies expressed the need for a series that would provide analyses of the most significant results of the 1950 Census. The Social Science Research Council, with the assistance of Russell Sage Foundation, took the lead in stimulating the formulation of suitable plans and in June 1950 appointed a Committee on Census Monographs to cooperate with the Bureau in organizing this project. The members of the Committee are:

Ralph G. Hurlin, Russell Sage Foundation (Chairman)

Robert W. Burgess, formerly Western Electric Company, since February 1953 Director of the Bureau of the Census

John D. Durand, United Nations

Ernest M. Fisher, Columbia University

F. F. Hill, Cornell University

Frederick F. Stephan, Princeton University

Conrad Taeuber, Bureau of the Census

Ralph J. Watkins, Dun & Bradstreet, Inc.

Paul Webbink, Social Science Research Council

J. Frederic Dewhurst, Twentieth Century Fund, and William F. Ogburn, University of Chicago, were members of the Committee during the first year and a half.

It is essential in any sound census monograph program to obtain the cooperation of authors with a broad understanding not only of the statistical information provided by the regular tabulations of the current census but also of the results of earlier censuses and other relevant knowledge and points of view from other sources and even from other countries. The preparation of a monograph should include broad exploration of new questions suggested by the new information, as well as narrowing the elements of doubt and controversy on old questions. The Social Science Research Council Committee early undertook, in consultation with leading figures in various professional fields, to develop a suggested list of monograph titles and authors and persuaded experts in the subject areas selected to undertake the preparation of memoranda outlining and discussing the topics proposed. Then, in 1951, arrangements were made for continuing cooperation between the Committee and the Bureau concerning the selection of topics, proposals of authors and consultants, and editorial supervision.

Throughout the conduct of the project there has been close collaboration with a number of interested Federal agencies and with universities and research organizations, which provided staff and facilities to help bring the project to completion. They and the Council, which also obtained necessary funds from the Rockefeller and Russell Sage Foundations, provided assistance without which the monographs could not have been prepared.

The task of preparing monographs is an essential part of the broad function of making the information secured by censuses fully available to satisfy the needs and interests of the community and to constitute a broad base for further studies in the social sciences. As Director of the Census and President of the Social Science Research Council, respectively, we wish to record our full approval of the monograph project. It is not implied, of course, that the views expressed in these reports are necessarily those of the Bureau of the Census, the Department of Commerce, or the

Social Science Research Council. The views are those of the individual authors, each of whom has been given the freedom to interpret available materials in the light of his technical knowledge and competence. This freedom of the individual authors is an essential element in making the most useful analyses and interpretations generally available to the community.

ROBERT W. BURGESS, DIRECTOR
BUREAU OF THE CENSUS

PENDLETON HERRING, PRESIDENT
SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL

March 1955

PREFACE

The purpose of this study is to present a demographic analysis of census data on American families at the midcentury. I have chosen the expression "American families" to convey the idea that the study is nationwide in scope and that families vary in their composition and other characteristics. Most of the information was obtained from the 1950 Census of Population or from the annual sample surveys of families conducted by the Bureau of the Census since 1944. The analysis is largely descriptive rather than theoretical. My hope is that others will find in the descriptive material a source for the testing of theoretical hypotheses. In some places I have considered it necessary to introduce technical concepts and statistical measures which may be unfamiliar to the reader. In the summary chapter, however, I have omitted as many as possible of the technical qualifications in order to highlight the main findings.

Much of the discussion in this monograph centers on adults in the age range between, but not including, adolescence and old age. This is the period of life when persons are most likely to marry, establish a home, rear children, and launch their sons and daughters on the same cycle of family life. Other monographs in this series, to appear later, will present analyses of census data on children and youth and on the aging population. Some overlap in content among the three monographs is inevitable and even desirable. Several of the other monographs in the series include discussions of marriage, household formation, and related subjects. Among these are the monographs on fertility, housing, urban and rural communities, the labor force, income, and the growth of the population.

During the 17 years since I joined the staff of the Bureau of the Census as a family analyst, I have been greatly impressed by the rapid growth in the number of persons who have come to depend upon our family statistics to answer some of their pressing questions. These persons represent a wide variety of interests. The greatest increase has evidently been among commercial research workers who are concerned with trends in household formation as an indication of the potential future demand for housing, home appliances, utilities, magazines, automobiles, and other types of goods and services which are ordinarily purchased or used on a household basis. Increasing numbers of teachers, counselors, government research workers, and students have been making use of our data on family living arrangements, the cycle of family growth, and patterns of marriage and

dissolution of marriage. I have attempted to keep in mind the interests of these users of family statistics in preparing this monograph.

Some of the basic data and many of the derived figures presented here have not been previously published. The new basic materials include statistics on family composition in relation to the advancing age of the family head. Among the new types of derived figures are the rates of marriage, separation, divorce, and widowhood, and the household, family, and marriage projections. I have, of course, made extensive use of census and vital statistics publications and of ideas formulated in my earlier publications in scientific journals. These publications revealed gaps in the previously available statistics which the new materials, in many instances, have filled. Several studies currently being developed by the Bureau of the Census and the National Office of Vital Statistics should fill some of the remaining gaps.

I want to thank the Bureau of the Census and the Social Science Research Council for granting me the opportunity to prepare this monograph. No previous research experience has given me so much satisfaction. Any merits the study may have, however, depend in large measure on the helpful assistance of the numerous persons who have generously shared at one stage or another in the preparation of the study. I wish especially to thank Dr. Conrad Taeuber of the Bureau of the Census, Dr. William F. Ogburn of Florida State University, and Professor Frederick F. Stephan of Princeton University for their constructive criticism of the entire manuscript. They have offered many invaluable suggestions for improving the clarity of expression, for reorganizing the materials, and for modifying the interpretative comments. Among the other persons whom I wish to thank for having reviewed the manuscript in whole or in part are Dr. Ralph Hurlin of the Russell Sage Foundation and Paul Webbink of the Social Science Research Council. Any shortcomings in the study are, of course, my own responsibility.

Many staff members of the Bureau of the Census helped me in various ways in assembling the data for this monograph. Wilson H. Grabill gave me advice on numerous occasions when I encountered methodological problems. Emanuel Landau assisted me in organizing the preparation of the tables in the current family statistics reports which constituted the basic source of data, and relieved me of many official duties while I was preoccupied with the monograph. Patience Lauriat assisted in the development of the procedures for calculating the standardized rates and the household and family projections. Without the cooperation of these colleagues, much of the work on the monograph would have been delayed or would have been done in a less efficient manner. I also owe many thanks to Elva L. Marquard, Mildred M. Russell, and Leah S. Anderson for carefully editing the manuscript and suggesting many places where the word-

ing of the text could be made less technical and where the descriptive material on the tables could be made more self-explanatory and consistent. Finally, I want to express gratitude to my wife, Joy, and to our sons, Paul Jr. and David, for the insights they have given me on family life and for their active encouragement during the period when I was preparing this monograph.

PAUL C. GLICK

C O N T E N T S

CHAPTER 1

FAMILY LIVING ARRANGEMENTS

This study presents an analysis of demographic data on family life in the United States collected by the Bureau of the Census in its decennial censuses and its current surveys. These data cover the fields of family composition, social and economic characteristics of the family, and family formation and dissolution. The treatment of family composition is introduced by a discussion of the living arrangements of the people. In this chapter, an attempt is made to show the wide variety of family groupings and the usual circumstances under which people live with some of their relatives and under which they live alone. The first consideration is the distinguishing features of a family, as compared with related types of units.

What is a family?

Perhaps the word "family" is most often used in referring to a married couple with children. Yet, this is only one of the many types of groups in which people live. The question arises at once, therefore, as to how far a group can deviate from the typical cluster of parents and children and still be regarded as a family. What about the young couple with no children? Or the serviceman's wife who makes her home with her parents? Or the old couple in the home of their son and daughter-in-law? Or the couple living in a hotel? Or the husband and wife who live apart because of the nature of the husband's work, the bachelor and his spinster sister who keep house together, the middle-aged divorced woman and her children who live in an apartment, the widower who lives alone, or the aging mother who lives with her daughter and son-in-law? Which of these constitutes a family? And do any of them constitute two families?

The simple picture of a married couple with children obviously shows only one of the innumerable ways in which people live. True, a substantial number of family groupings are of this type, but percentagewise such groupings are actually in the minority, as may be seen from the figures in table 1. In this table, the entire population of the United States in 1953 has been classified into units that are called, for want of a better term, "household units." Each unit consists of a group of related persons living together or a person living apart from relatives. Of the 57 million household units in 1953, about three-tenths (28.6 percent) represented married couples with children of their own of dependent age and no other relatives

in the household.   This percentage would be still lower if it excluded married couples who share their living quarters not only with their children but also with lodgers or resident employees.   Other large groups are married couples without any young children currently in their households (27.4 percent) and persons living in their own homes apart from any relatives (10.8 percent).[1]   These three groups account for two-thirds of all household units and all have homes of their own.   More than four-fifths of the people live in these homes.

TABLE 1.—MARRIED COUPLES, OTHER FAMILY GROUPS, AND PERSONS LIVING ALONE: APRIL 1953

Type of unit	All units		With own household	Without own household
	Number	Percent		
Total..............................	57,090,000	...	46,828,000	10,262,000
Percent...........................	...	100.0	82.0	18.0
Married couples[1].........................	37,106,000	65.0	62.3	2.7
With own children under 18[2].............	20,686,000	36.2	34.9	1.3
With no other relatives...............	17,090,000	29.9	28.6	1.3
With other relatives..................	3,596,000	6.3	6.3	...
With no own children under 18...........	16,420,000	28.8	27.4	1.4
Other family groups[3]......................	5,876,000	10.3	9.0	1.3
With own children under 18..............	2,442,000	4.3	3.1	1.2
With no own children under 18...........	3,434,000	6.0	5.9	0.1
Persons living alone[4].....................	14,108,000	24.7	10.8	13.9
In own households......................	6,148,000	10.8	10.8	...
Lodgers and resident employees..........	3,878,000	6.8	...	6.8
Members of Armed Forces[5]................	2,512,000	4.4	...	4.4
Inmates of institutions.................	1,570,000	2.7	...	2.7

[1] A married couple, according to census terminology, refers to a man and his wife living together.

[2] "Own children" refers to sons and daughters, including stepchildren and adopted children, living in their parental homes.

[3] Groups comprising two or more relatives, but no married couples, living together.

[4] Persons living apart from relatives.

[5] Includes Armed Forces outside continental United States; restricted to those living apart from relatives.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, Nos. 17, 50, 53, and 56; and unpublished data.

Thus, what actually is a wide variety of units can be reduced to a manageable number of classes.   The preponderant majority fall into a really small number of categories, as a matter of fact, and the deviant minorities account for only a small part of the population.   The minority groupings nonetheless have special significance because they include most of the persons in broken homes, all of the groups sharing the living quarters of others, the military personnel away from their homes, and the institutional population.

[1] In addition to the 10.8 percent living in their own homes apart from relatives, 13.9 percent were living apart from relatives as lodgers, resident employees, military personnel, or inmates of institutions. Thus, 24.7 percent, or about one-fourth, of the household units consisted of persons living apart from relatives.   For some purposes, the figures in table 1 would have more meaning if these "unattached persons" were omitted.   If they were omitted, the remaining percentages would be about one-third larger than those given and would all relate to family units, that is, groups of related persons living together.

The expressions used to identify the several types of units in table 1 are meant to be self-explanatory, although some footnotes are given for clarification. If no more complex classification were ever needed than that shown in this table, perhaps more formal family concepts would be unnecessary. Difficulties arise, however, when various characteristics are to be shown for units represented by each cell in the table unless relatively short labels, such as those in table 2, are available for the cell.

TABLE 2.—HOUSEHOLDS, FAMILIES, SUBFAMILIES, UNRELATED INDIVIDUALS, AND INMATES OF INSTITUTIONS: APRIL 1953

Type of unit	Number	Percent	Type of unit	Number	Percent
HOUSEHOLD UNITS			**HOUSEHOLD UNITS--Cont.**		
Total......................	57,090,000	100.0	Secondary individuals..........	6,390,000	11.2
Households.......................	46,828,000	82.0	Lodgers and resident employees..................	3,878,000	6.8
Husband-wife primary families..	35,560,000	62.3	Members of Armed Forces[2].....	2,512,000	4.4
With own children under 18[1]..	19,944,000	34.9			
With no other relatives....	16,354,000	28.6	Inmates of institutions........	1,570,000	2.7
With other relatives.......	3,590,000	6.3			
With no own children under 18	15,616,000	27.4			
With no other relatives....	11,050,000	19.4	**FAMILIES**		
With other relatives.......	4,566,000	8.0			
Other primary families.........	5,120,000	9.0	Total....................	41,020,000	100.0
With own children under 18...	1,763,000	3.1			
With no own children under 18	3,357,000	5.9	Primary families...............	40,680,000	99.2
Primary individuals.............	6,148,000	10.8	Husband-wife type.............	35,560,000	86.7
			Other types..................	5,120,000	12.5
Subfamilies and secondary families......................	2,302,000	4.0			
Husband-wife type...............	1,546,000	2.7	Secondary families.............	340,000	0.8
With own children under 18...	742,000	1.3	Husband-wife type.............	222,000	0.5
With no own children under 18	804,000	1.4	Other types..................	118,000	0.3
Other types....................	756,000	1.3			
With own children under 18...	679,000	1.2			
With no own children under 18	77,000	0.1			

[1] Sons and daughters living in their parental homes.
[2] Includes Armed Forces outside continental United States; restricted to those living apart from relatives.
Source: Same as table 1.

A "household" is defined as the entire group of persons who occupy a house, apartment, or other type of living quarters classified as a dwelling unit; and a "quasi household" is defined as the entire group of persons who occupy a housing unit not classified as a dwelling unit. According to the terminology formulated by the Bureau of the Census in 1947, a "family" is a group of two or more persons who live together and who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption; all such persons living together are regarded as members of the same family. A "subfamily" is a married man and his wife with or without children, or one parent and one or more own children under 18 years old, sharing the dwelling unit of a relative. (For fuller definitions of family concepts, see Appendix A.)

The titles of several of the formal concepts contain the words "primary" or "secondary." "Primary" consistently means "with own household," that is, maintaining a home (which may be either owned or rented); and "secondary" means "without own household." "Subfamilies" may be regarded as a group within a group; they are not counted in determining

the number of families. Sometimes subfamilies are combined with secondary families to present data on family units without their own households. Unrelated individuals are persons (other than inmates of institutions) who are not living with any relatives. There are two types of unrelated individuals: primary individuals and secondary individuals. The former are heads of households and the latter are not.

Nearly three-fourths of all household units are families; all but 1 percent of the families are primary families and the remainder are secondary families. Approximately 3 percent of the household units are subfamilies and one-fourth are persons not in families (primary or secondary individuals, or inmates). Most of the families and subfamilies are of the husband-wife type, and a little over half include sons or daughters (own children) under 18 years old of the head. When the household contains young sons or daughters of the head, it generally does not contain family members other than the head, wife, and children.

Living arrangements of the population

In this section, the focus will shift to the number of persons in various types of living arrangements in 1953.[2] Attention will be given first to persons 14 years old and over, that is, youths and adults. Separate data will be given for those in unbroken marriages, those in broken marriages, and those who had never married. Later, the living arrangements of the child population will be described.

Youths and adults. In 1953, most of the youths and adults (86 percent) were living in homes of their own, in the sense that they fell into one of three groups: (1) they were heads of households and therefore maintained their own homes; (2) they were wives living with husbands who maintained the home; or (3) they were never-married sons or daughters living with parents who maintained the home (table 3 and figure 1). The remaining minority may be characterized as sharing the homes of others or living in institutions.

Of all persons in 1953 who had ever been married, all but 15 percent were in unbroken marriages (some of which were second or subsequent marriages) and, significantly, all but 3 percent of those in unbroken marriages were living with their spouse. Of the approximately 2 million in unbroken marriages who were not living with their spouse, about one-fourth were married women whose husbands were serving in the Armed Forces, and most of the remainder were probably persons living apart

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[2] The coverage of the population is somewhat more limited here than that in the preceding section, where the figures covered the entire population, including members of the Armed Forces overseas. All civilians and the approximately 982,000 members of the Armed Forces living off post or with their families on post in continental United States are included in the population discussed in the present section. All other members of the Armed Forces are excluded. This is the standard coverage of the Current Population Survey of the Bureau of the Census, and for convenience the group is called the civilian population.

FIGURE 1.—PERCENT OF PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER LIVING IN OWN HOME,
BY MARITAL STATUS: 1953
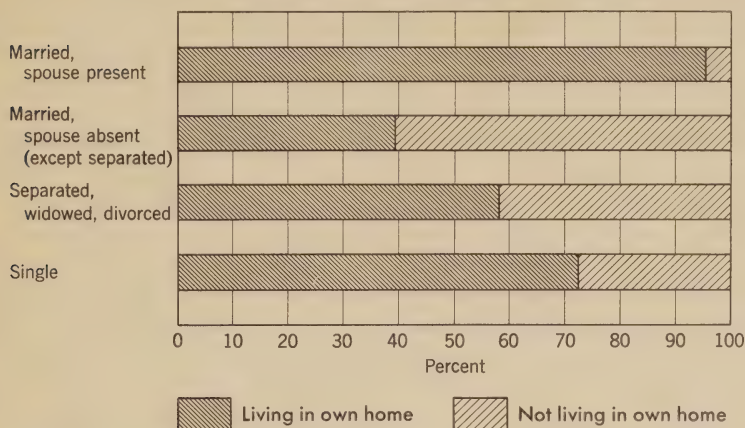
Note: Based on data in table 3.

TABLE 3.—CIVILIAN POPULATION 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY MARITAL STATUS, HOUSEHOLD
STATUS, AND SEX: APRIL 1953

Marital status and sex	Total, 14 years old and over	Percent distribution		
		Total	Living in own home	Not living in own home
Total...........................	113,724,000	100.0	85.5	14.5
Male...........................	54,784,000	100.0	86.2	13.8
Female.........................	58,940,000	100.0	84.9	15.1
In unbroken marriages[1]........	76,280,000	100.0	94.3	5.7
Spouse present.................	74,212,000	100.0	95.8	4.2
Spouse absent..................	2,068,000	100.0	39.4	60.6
Husband absent in Armed Forces..	496,000	100.0	39.5	60.5
Other..........................	1,572,000	100.0	39.3	60.7
Male..........................	830,000	100.0	29.6	70.4
Female........................	742,000	100.0	50.1	49.9
In broken marriages[2]...........	13,670,000	100.0	58.3	41.7
Male..........................	3,848,000	100.0	52.2	47.8
Female........................	9,822,000	100.0	60.7	39.3
Single (never married).........	23,774,000	100.0	72.9	27.1
Male..........................	13,000,000	100.0	72.2	27.8
Female........................	10,774,000	100.0	73.7	26.3

[1] Includes persons in remarriages.

[2] Includes separated, divorced, and widowed persons.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 53, tables 2, 3, 4, 7, and 11; and No. 50, table 1.

from their spouse because the spouse was employed away from home or was an inmate of an institution.

Nearly all (96 percent) of the married couples in 1953 were living in their own homes, that is, the husband was the head of the household. Least likely to be heads of households were men in unbroken marriages who were living apart from their spouse; among these men, only 30 percent were heads of households. Evidently, most of these men, though on

extended absences from their wives, still considered their permanent homes
to be in the dwelling units occupied by their wives and hence they had set
up no separate housekeeping arrangements. This hypothesis is consistent
with the much larger proportion (50 percent) of women in unbroken mar-
riages who were living apart from their husbands but who continued to
maintain separate households. About half of the difference may, however,
be due to the greater number of married men than married women in
institutions; and some of the remainder may be accounted for by such men
as construction workers, who spend several weeks or months away from
their homes while on jobs in other communities.

Of all the persons in broken marriages, about six out of every ten were
heads of households (table 4). The proportions for separated persons and
divorced persons were below this average. Separated and divorced women
were more likely than separated and divorced men to maintain homes,
perhaps largely because the children in homes broken by marital discord
are generally left in the care of the mother and she finds it necessary to
provide living quarters for them.[3] Widowed persons constituted 70 per-
cent of all persons in broken marriages. Five out of every eight of the
widowers and widows were heads of their own households. Widowhood,
more often than separation or divorce, comes at a relatively advanced age
when the family's lifetime savings are greater and are more likely to have
been used, in part, to establish a separate home.

TABLE 4.—CIVILIAN POPULATION 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER IN BROKEN MARRIAGES,
BY MARITAL STATUS, HOUSEHOLD STATUS, AND SEX: APRIL 1953

Marital status and sex	Total, 14 years old and over, in broken marriages	Percent distribution		
		Total	With own household	Without own household
Total............................	13,670,000	100.0	58.3	41.7
Male...........................	3,848,000	100.0	52.2	47.8
Female.........................	9,822,000	100.0	60.7	39.3
Separated........................	1,758,000	100.0	43.1	56.9
Male...........................	676,000	100.0	32.8	67.2
Female.........................	1,082,000	100.0	49.5	50.5
Divorced.........................	2,280,000	100.0	53.2	46.8
Male...........................	944,000	100.0	41.3	58.7
Female.........................	1,336,000	100.0	61.7	38.3
Widowed.........................	9,632,000	100.0	62.3	37.7
Male...........................	2,228,000	100.0	62.7	37.3
Female.........................	7,404,000	100.0	62.2	37.8

Source: Same as table 3.

Living arrangements of persons in each marital status are classified in
greater detail in table 5. This table shows how persons in four different
marital status classes were distributed among about a dozen different
household status and family status classes. In general, married persons

[3] Separated persons are included among those with "broken marriages," though the marriages had
not actually been dissolved. Many of these persons had only temporarily broken marriages and would
become reconciled with their marital partners. Others would become divorced. The Bureau of the
Census, however, has found no basis for estimating the proportion in each of these two categories.

with spouse present are concentrated in the two categories, head of household and wife of household head; married persons with spouse absent and persons in broken marriages are scattered among the several categories; and single persons are concentrated in two groups, children of the household head and other family members. Persons in unbroken marriages but with spouse absent more often made their homes with relatives as subfamily heads (with children of their own present) than did persons in broken marriages.

About 3 percent of the single persons and of persons in broken marriages were in institutions. In contrast, a much higher proportion (17 percent) of married persons with spouse absent were in institutions. This apparently high proportion may be misleading because married inmates are actually drawn from the entire married population. A much more meaningful figure is the proportion of married persons as a group who are in institutions. This level is quite low (0.5 percent) as compared with the corresponding level for persons with broken marriages and for single persons, and the difference is attributable only partly to differences in age distributions by marital status.

TABLE 5.—CIVILIAN POPULATION 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY HOUSEHOLD STATUS, FAMILY STATUS, AND MARITAL STATUS: APRIL 1953

Household status and family status	Total, 14 years and over		In unbroken marriages[1]			In broken marriages	Single (never married)
	Number	Percent	Total	Spouse present	Spouse absent		
Total..................	113,724,000	...	76,280,000	74,212,000	2,068,000	13,670,000	23,774,000
Percent..............	...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Living in own home..........	97,237,000	85.5	94.3	95.8	39.4	58.3	72.9
Head of household.........	46,828,000	41.2	47.7	47.9	39.4	58.3	10.4
Head of primary family...	40,680,000	35.8	47.4	47.9	27.2	27.3	3.5
Primary individual......	6,148,000	5.4	0.3	...	12.2	31.0	6.9
Wife of head of household.	35,560,000	31.3	46.6	47.9	...	...	...
Single[2] child of head.....	14,849,000	13.1	...	...	...	...	62.5
Not living in own home......	16,487,000	14.5	5.7	4.2	60.6	41.7	27.1
Head of subfamily.........	1,962,000	1.7	2.0	1.8	9.6	3.2	...
Wife of head of subfamily.	1,324,000	1.2	1.7	1.8	...	...	...
Head of secondary family..	340,000	0.3	0.3	0.3	1.4	0.6	...
Wife of head of secondary family....................	222,000	0.2	0.3	0.3	...	...	...
Other family member.......	7,569,000	6.7	0.6	...	20.8	25.9	15.2
Secondary individual......	3,626,000	3.2	0.3	...	12.2	9.2	8.9
Inmate of institution.....	1,444,000	1.3	0.5	...	16.7	2.9	3.0

[1] Includes persons in remarriages.

[2] Never married.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 53, tables 2, 3, 4, 7, and 11; No. 50, table 1; and *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter D, Marital Status, table 1.

The living arrangements of persons with broken marriages are shown more fully in table 6. Of all persons in 1953 whose latest marriage had been broken, about three-fifths had relatives in the household who could provide companionship and financial assistance. Those living with relatives were divided about evenly between those who were heads of households and those who were not.

TABLE **6.**—CIVILIAN POPULATION 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER IN BROKEN MARRIAGES, BY
HOUSEHOLD STATUS, FAMILY STATUS, AND MARITAL STATUS: APRIL 1953

Household status and family status	Total, 14 years and over in broken marriages		Separated	Divorced	Widowed
	Number	Percent			
In broken marriages.........	13,670,000	...	1,758,000	2,280,000	9,632,000
Percent...................	...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
With own household (head).........	7,972,000	58.3	43.1	53.2	62.3
Head of primary family..........	3,728,000	27.3	23.0	23.9	28.9
Primary individual..............	4,244,000	31.0	20.1	29.4	33.4
Without own household.........	5,698,000	41.7	56.9	46.8	37.7
Head of subfamily..............	440,000	3.2	11.6	7.8	0.6
Head of secondary family........	82,000	0.6	1.1	0.7	0.5
Other family member.............	3,534,000	25.9	26.2	20.0	27.2
Secondary individual............	1,252,000	9.2	14.6	14.5	6.9
Inmate of institution...........	390,000	2.9	3.4	3.8	2.5

Source: Same as table 5.

Separated, divorced, and widowed persons differed significantly in their
living arrangements. Separated persons were least likely to maintain a
home apart from relatives, and widowed persons were most likely to do
so. On the other hand, separated persons were most often heads of sub-
families and widowed persons least often. These contrasts reflect age dif-
ferences and also differences in the probability of having young children
who could not be readily left alone while the parent earned a living. Again,
it may be that many separated women with children moved in with their
parents and took care of the house while their parents worked outside the
home. Aside from demographic factors, social and psychological factors
often enter the situation. Thus, the willingness of relatives to have the
person with a broken marriage move in with them may be determined by
the circumstances that led to the broken marriage.

The child population. The discussion thus far has been limited to
persons 14 years old and over. In table 7, children of dependent ages
(under 14 and 14 to 17) in 1953 are classified by household status and
family status. The figures show that all but 1 or 2 percent of these chil-
dren lived in families. However, 9 or 10 percent of them either lived in
a home that was not maintained by their parents or had married. About
half of this 9 or 10 percent lived as subfamily members with one or both
parents, generally in the home of their grandparents; a majority of those
remaining also lived with relatives. About one-half million children under
18 years old were foster children, wards, or inmates of institutions. These
types of children represented 1 percent of those under 14 and 2 percent
of those 14 to 17. Thus, nearly all young children live in a family setting,
though not necessarily in a home provided by their parents.

More information is available about children living with their parents
than about other children. Ninety-six percent of the children under 18
years old in 1953 lived with one or both parents (table 8, footnote 3).
Nine-tenths of all children under 18 living with parents lived with both

TABLE 7.—POPULATION UNDER 18 YEARS OLD, BY HOUSEHOLD STATUS, FAMILY STATUS, AND AGE: APRIL 1953

Household status and family status	Population under 18 years		Under 14 years	14 to 17 years
	Number	Percent		
Total......................	51,566,000	...	42,782,000	8,784,000
Percent....................	...	100.0	100.0	100.0
In families.....................	50,991,000	98.9	99.1	98.1
In primary families..............	50,717,000	98.4	98.5	97.6
Single children of head[1].......	46,806,000	90.8	90.9	90.3
In subfamilies..................	2,264,000	4.4	4.5	3.8
Other..........................	1,647,000	3.2	3.1	3.4
In secondary families............	274,000	0.5	0.5	0.5
Secondary individual[2]..........	362,000	0.7	0.6	1.0
Inmate of institution............	213,000	0.4	0.3	1.0

[1] Children considered as living in own home. Refers to never-married sons and daughters, including stepchildren and adopted children, of the head of the household.
[2] Mostly foster children and wards.

Source: Same as table 5.

TABLE 8.—NUMBER OF FAMILIES AND SUBFAMILIES AND NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD IN FAMILIES AND SUBFAMILIES, BY PRESENCE OF PARENTS: APRIL 1953

Presence of children and parents	Families and subfamilies		Children living with one or both parents[1]		Average number of children per family or subfamily
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
Total.........................	[2]42,982,000	100.0	[3]49,339,000	100.0	1.15
No own children under 18.............	19,866,000	46.2	...	...	...
1 or more own children under 18......	23,116,000	53.8	49,339,000	100.0	2.13
Father and mother present..........	20,676,000	48.1	44,624,000	90.4	2.16
Father only present................	336,000	0.8	621,000	1.3	1.85
Mother only present................	2,104,000	4.9	4,094,000	8.3	1.95

[1] Sons and daughters under 18 years old of the family or subfamily head.
[2] Includes 40,442,000 families and 2,034,000 subfamilies.
[3] The total number of children under 18 years old in April 1953 was 51,566,000. Of the 2,227,000 living with neither parent, about 1,652,000 were living with relatives other than their parents, 362,000 were living with nonrelatives, and 213,000 were living in institutions. (See table 7.)

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 53, tables 1, 4, and 7.

parents, and seven out of every eight of the remainder lived with the mother only.

The number of children per family or subfamily was only slightly greater where both parents were in the household than where only one was present. This situation evidently results from differences in the age distributions of parents in broken and unbroken marriages and from numerous other factors, some of which may compensate each other. On the one hand, marriages of persons in the lower economic classes are more likely to be broken by death, because death rates are higher in those classes. When the spouse in such a family dies, the family is likely to have more children than an unbroken family in a higher economic class with spouses of comparable ages, because birth rates are higher in the lower classes. On the other hand, a family broken by divorce probably is likely to have

fewer children than an otherwise similar unbroken family. Thus, larger families with widowed heads and smaller families with divorced heads tend to offset each other. At the same time. divorced or widowed persons with one or two children are more likely to remarry than divorced or widowed persons with three or more, as will be shown in Chapter 7; hence, the larger families are more likely to remain in the one-parent group. Research, based on data not now available, would be required to provide an adequate assessment of the relative significance of these and related factors.

Changes in living arrangements, 1910 to 1954

Although source materials on the living arrangements of the population at the time of past censuses are limited, available data provide a basis for estimating some of the missing figures. Thus, it is possible to draw some inferences about changes in household relationship during the last generation and a half. Many of the changes reflect the long-time downward trend in size of family, and others have grown out of the gradual aging of the population. Still other changes can be explained by variations in marriage and birth rates during prosperous and depression periods, and by trends away from sharing the living quarters of others as lodgers or housekeepers. More and more people have maintained separate homes for their immediate families, or for themselves alone after their spouses died and their children married. Some of these trends were accelerated in the decade after World War II, and others were reversed.

An over-all view of the changes in household relationship between 1910 and 1954 may be obtained by examining table 9. Current Population Survey data are presented for 1947 to 1954 and decennial census data are shown for 1910 to 1940. In interpreting the survey figures, it is relevant to note, once again, that the totals exclude members of the Armed Forces except those who lived off post or with their families on post. Because of the changing size of the Armed Forces, some of the underlying trends are obscured. Thus, the average annual increase in the population as covered by the survey shows a peak period of growth from 1947 to 1950, followed by a slower rate of growth; but if all military personnel had been included, the average annual increase would have shown a continuous rise from 1.7 million for the period 1940 to 1947 to 2.5 million for 1947 to 1950 and 2.7 million for 1950 to 1954.

The steady rise from 1910 to 1950 in the proportion of the population classified as household heads resulted from the declining average size of household. This average turned upward by the middle of the 1950's because the number of children per household increased. The average annual increase in number of households, which is the same as the average annual increase in the number of heads of households, has followed a pattern quite different from that of the average annual increase in total population, because population growth varied largely according to the number of births

TABLE **9.**—POPULATION BY HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIP: 1910 TO 1954

[Minus sign (−) denotes decrease]

Date	Total population	Head of household	Wife of head	Other relative of head	Non-relative of head[1]	Member of quasi household[1]
April 1954..................	[2]159,223,000	46,893,000	35,875,000	70,412,000	3,263,000	[2]2,780,000
March 1950..................	[2]149,838,000	43,554,000	34,075,000	65,064,000	4,142,000	[2]3,003,000
April 1947..................	[2]142,061,000	39,107,000	30,612,000	64,774,000	4,621,000	[2]2,947,000
April 1940..................	131,669,000	34,949,000	26,571,000	61,411,000	5,496,000	3,242,000
April 1930..................	122,775,000	29,905,000	23,649,000	60,721,000	5,537,000	2,963,000
April 1910..................	91,972,000	20,256,000	16,250,000	49,517,000	4,505,000	1,444,000
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION						
April 1954..................	100.0	29.5	22.5	44.2	2.0	1.7
March 1950..................	100.0	29.1	22.7	43.4	2.8	2.0
April 1947..................	100.0	27.5	21.5	45.6	3.3	2.1
April 1940..................	100.0	26.5	20.3	46.6	4.2	2.5
April 1930..................	100.0	24.4	19.3	49.5	4.5	2.4
April 1910..................	100.0	22.0	17.7	53.8	4.9	1.6
AVERAGE ANNUAL INCREASE						
1950 to 1954.................	2,298,000	818,000	441,000	1,310,000	−215,000	−55,000
1947 to 1950.................	2,666,000	1,525,000	1,187,000	99,000	−164,000	19,000
1940 to 1947.................	1,485,000	594,000	577,000	480,000	−125,000	−42,000
1930 to 1940.................	889,000	504,000	292,000	69,000	−4,000	28,000
1910 to 1930.................	1,543,000	483,000	371,000	561,000	52,000	76,000

[1] Figures affected somewhat by changes in definitions; see pp. 13, 14, 17, and 18.

[2] Total includes only those members of the Armed Forces living off post or with families on post. Excludes about 2.6 million members of the Armed Forces in 1954, 1.0 million in 1950, and 1.5 million in 1947, many of whom were stationed overseas. College students in dormitories counted as "other relatives" in parental homes rather than as quasi-household members. (See footnote 5 of table 10.)

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 56, tables D and 4; No. 55, table 2; No. 53, table 1; No. 42, table 1; No. 33, tables 3, 4, and 9; No. 17, table 1; No. 10, table 7; and unpublished data from 1910 fertility tabulations.

FIGURE **2.**—PERCENT OF POPULATION BY HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIP: 1910 TO 1954
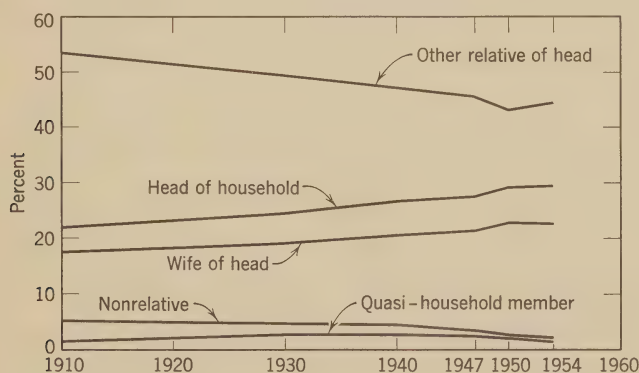
Note: Based on data in table 9.

whereas household growth followed more closely the increase in number of adults.

Even though most of the married women at any given time are wives of household heads, the correlation between increases in the number of

households and in the number of wives of household heads has been only moderate. The correlation was poorest during the 1930's when marriage rates were exceptionally low and during the 1950's when the increase in the number of households depended less than usual on the number of marriages. Aging of the population contributed to household growth in the 1950's not only because more adults lived longer but also because they maintained homes longer than before. The improved economic well-being of older persons probably enabled more of them to maintain households apart from their married children.

Persons related to the household head, other than wives, constituted a declining proportion of the population from 1910 to 1950 and an increasing proportion thereafter. These persons accounted for about 54 percent of the population in 1910 but dropped to 43 percent in 1950; from 1950 to 1954, this proportion increased. Most of these persons were children of the household head and were below the age of first marriage; but others were young married persons living "doubled-up" with relatives, or they were older persons who made their homes with their children or other relatives. The proportion of persons of these types declined during the 1930's when marriage and birth rates were low and doubling rates were high; however, the proportion continued to fall in the 1940's when marriage and birth rates were high and, especially during the late 1940's, when the doubling rate fell rapidly. During the late 1940's, the number of teen-age children was relatively small; consequently, the smaller number of young adults living in their parental homes more than offset the larger number of young children resulting from higher current birth rates. This combination of factors accounted, in large part, for the low annual increase in number of "other relatives" of the head between 1947 and 1950.

Between 1950 and 1954, the marriage and undoubling rates remained high and the number of civilians 18 to 24 years old (among whom first marriages are most often contracted) declined, partly because of the expansion of the Armed Forces; consequently, the number of young adults in parental households continued to go down. At the same time, however, the number of children in the lower teens started to increase and the number below teen age increased sharply. As a net result, the number of "other relatives" grew substantially between 1950 and 1954.

Nonrelatives of the household head include two basic types of persons: (1) those who pay rent for a room and use it as lodging quarters; and (2) those who keep house, take care of children, do farm work, or perform other services and receive, as part of their wages, free living quarters in the employer's home. Nonrelatives of the head constituted a gradually decreasing proportion of the population between 1910 and 1940; from 1940 to 1954, they diminished rapidly in number as well as in proportion. By 1954, there were only about three-fifths as many lodgers and resident employees as in 1940, and they represented only 2 percent of the

population; in 1910, they represented 5 percent. Evidently, this type of living arrangement did not fit so well into 1940 and 1950 patterns of family life as it did in earlier patterns. Building changes may have been one factor in this change. The average number of rooms in dwelling units built in the 1940's was smaller than that for units built before 1940, and the average number of children per household rose between 1950 and 1954; such factors tend to make less room available for lodgers in the 1950's than in the 1940's and earlier. Another factor in the decline in the number of lodgers is the rise in marriage rates. During the 1940's and early 1950's, many persons who married and established their own households would have, under earlier conditions, remained unmarried and lived as roomers. Moreover, men living as unmarried lodgers were perhaps the least likely to obtain deferments from military service during the war years. In addition, opportunities for more remunerative work in other industries and the increased use of labor-saving devices in the home brought about a sharp reduction in the number of persons in domestic service work. Finally, changes in definition, already mentioned, affect the interpretations of trends in the reported number of persons unrelated to the household head.

Members of quasi households are a heterogeneous group. They include inmates of institutions, roomers in large lodginghouses, guests in hotels, workmen in labor camps, and similar groups. They have always been a small proportion of the population, but between 1940 and 1954 they declined both numerically and proportionately. The figures in table 9 show that this class rose from 1.6 percent of the population in 1910 to 2.5 percent in 1940, and then declined to 1.7 percent in 1954. The 1910 figure may be low, in part because of difficulties in making estimates for that date. The survey figures on members of quasi households for 1947 to 1954 exclude members of the Armed Forces living in barracks; these persons were counted as quasi-household members in the Censuses of 1910, 1930, and 1940. (They were also counted as quasi-household members in the 1950 Census, but the 1950 figures in table 9 were based on the Current Population Survey which does not cover members of the Armed Forces living in barracks.)

The decline in quasi-household membership from 1940 to 1954 resulted in part from essentially the same types of changes that brought a decrease in the number of nonrelatives in households. Among these changes, perhaps one of the most important was the rise in marriage rates for adults in each age group and the subsequent shift of their residences from large lodginghouses or hotels to private households. Another change was the conversion of many large buildings that were once lodginghouses or hotels into apartment houses for private households.

Trends in the reported figures on the quasi-household population should be interpreted with caution because the classification of quasi-household members has changed, the size of the Armed Forces has fluctuated, and

other problems have intervened. For example, living quarters with 11 or more lodgers were classified as quasi households in 1940 and 1930 but in 1950 the criterion was changed to 5 or more. The effect was to show about 700,000 persons as quasi-household members (in about 100,000 quasi households) in 1950 who would have been classified as nonrelatives in households under the old definitions. Moreover, the decennial census figures (but not the Current Population Survey figures) on members of quasi households include about three-quarters of a million more members of the Armed Forces (in continental United States) in 1950 than in 1940 or 1930. In addition, the figures on the institutional population for 1930 and 1940 are not entirely comparable with those for 1950 because of the more careful attempt to identify and classify the institutional population in 1950.

Since 1930, inmates of institutions have constituted between one-third and one-half of the civilian population in quasi households. (In the determination of this fraction, the 1950 basis for identifying lodginghouses was used.) The number of inmates of all ages in 1930 was 1,533,000, that in 1940 was 1,340,000 (including an estimate of the number under 14 years of age), and that in 1950 was 1,567,000.[4] The number for 1940 would probably have been much closer to that for 1950 if patients in tuberculosis hospitals (about 75,000) had been included, as in 1950, and if there had been as complete coverage of "homes for the aged, infirm, and needy" in 1940 as in 1950. Had it not been for these changes, the reported rate of increase between 1940 and 1950 in the population 14 years old and over in institutions (23 percent) would have been much closer to that for the noninstitutional population (10 percent).

Factors related to type of living arrangements

Living arrangements of the population could be analyzed with respect to many more characteristics than space permits. Attention will be given here only to data at the national level on the factors of age, sex, color, and urban-rural residence. In the census reports, data on living arrangements are presented for geographic regions, States, cities, and other residence classifications. In Chapter 8, the relationship between type of living quarters, marital status, education, and income is treated.

Age composition. The distribution of the population by household relationship varies sharply from one broad age level to another. Within age groups, important differences in growth patterns among the several relationship categories took place during the 1940's (table 10). As a criterion for interpreting the data, the rate of increase in the total population of a given age group may be used. In general, however, the percent

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[4] *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter C, Institutional Population, table 1 (see page 7 for discussion of comparability of data from earlier censuses); *1940 Census of Population, Institutional Population*, table 1; and *1930 Census of Population*, Vol. VI, *Families*, table 11.

increase or decrease for a particular relationship category can obviously not differ widely from that for the age group as a whole, if that category represents a rather large proportion of all persons in the age group. To take an extreme case, persons classified as child of the household head constituted nine-tenths of all persons under 15 years of age; hence, the percent increase during the 1940's for those under 15 in this category (22.8 percent) was naturally quite close to that for all persons under 15 (23.3 percent).

TABLE 10.—PERCENT INCREASE IN POPULATION, 1940 TO 1950, BY HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIP AND AGE

[Minus sign (—) denotes decrease]

Household relationship	All ages	Under 15 years	15 to 24 years	25 to 44 years	45 to 64 years	65 to 74 years	75 years and over
Total....................	14.1	23.3	-7.7	13.1	16.3	31.8	45.8
In households.................	12.6	22.8	-12.8	12.5	15.5	30.3	41.8
Head........................	20.9	[1]772.3	46.2	20.5	14.4	29.1	43.6
Wife........................	25.2	[1]15.0	28.6	24.0	22.5	45.1	60.9
Child.......................	4.2	22.8	-24.2	-17.3	12.5	([2])	...
Grandchild..................	20.6	28.6	-12.2	-31.2	...	...	...
Parent......................	23.8	...	...	13.5	16.8	20.8	34.8
Other relative..............	6.9	23.5	-6.6	1.0	12.4	29.8	53.6
Lodger[3]...................	-19.5	-17.4	-19.5	-31.7	-11.6	10.2	20.0
Resident employee..........	-56.1	[3]665.0	-75.5	-66.3	-36.3	2.3	41.2
In quasi households[3]..........	74.7	107.0	169.8	34.5	40.6	71.9	114.5
Inmate of institution.......	25.4	[4]52.7	-1.0	9.3	20.8	73.6	
Other member[5].............	105.6	159.2	244.0	47.3	53.8	109.5	

[1] Based on very small frequencies.

[2] Included with "other relative" in 1940.

[3] Figures affected somewhat by changes in definitions; see pp. 13 and 14.

[4] Distribution of quasi-household members under 14 years old in 1940 among inmates and other members was estimated.

[5] Includes all members of Armed Forces in military barracks in continental United States in 1950 as well as 1940. Also includes all college students in dormitories in 1950 but not in 1940. See footnote 2 of table 9.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, tables 107 and 108; Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter C, Institutional Population, table 3; *1940 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Characteristics by Age*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, tables 11 and 12; and *Institutional Population*, table 4.

High marriage rates during the 1940's underlie many of the changes in household relationship shown in table 10. High first marriage rates are no doubt chiefly responsible for the relatively large increases in the proportions of persons under 45 years old who lived in homes they had established (as head and wife). High remarriage rates and the lengthening period of joint survival of married men and their wives must have been central factors in the relatively large increases in the proportion of women 45 years old and over who were married and living in households maintained by them and their husbands. Thus, an increasing proportion of men and their wives live to be 50, 60, 70, and even 80 years of age, as medical science advances.

Table 11 shows the effects of the baby boom of the 1940's on the num-

ber of children, grandchildren, and other relatives under 10 years old.   In this age range, changes in the number of grandchildren of the head parallel closely those for children of the head.   However, children living in the homes of their grandparents are much more heavily concentrated among those under 10 years old than are sons and daughters of the head.   Consequently, the relatively large increase in the total number of grandchildren is directly related to the high birth rates of the 1940's.   Some of the increase in the number of grandchildren of the head may have also arisen from the expansion of the Armed Forces; many wives of servicemen must have moved with their children into the homes of the children's grandparents.

TABLE 11.—PERCENT INCREASE IN POPULATION UNDER 25 YEARS OF AGE, 1940 TO 1950, BY HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIP AND AGE

[Minus sign (−) denotes decrease]

Household relationship	Total under 25 years	Under 5 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 14 years	15 to 19 years	20 to 24 years
Total......................	10.3	54.1	23.9	−4.9	−13.7	−1.3
In households....................	8.0	53.3	23.4	−5.3	−18.2	−7.1
Head..........................	46.7	...	...	[1]772.3	66.5	45.0
Wife..........................	28.6	...	...	[1]15.0	24.8	29.4
Child.........................	6.5	53.7	23.9	−5.2	−20.7	−30.5
Grandchild....................	21.6	51.1	22.6	−4.7	−12.9	−10.1
Other relative................	2.4	66.7	19.8	1.4	−10.2	−4.0
Lodger[2]......................	−18.9	10.8	−20.0	−37.7	−17.6	−20.3
Resident employee[2]...........	−70.5	([3])	([3])	[3]198.7	−70.6	−78.9
In quasi households[2].............	156.0	316.4	116.4	43.1	102.4	150.6

[1] Based on very small frequencies.

[2] Figures affected somewhat by changes in definitions; see pp. 13, 14, 17, and 18.

[3] In 1950, included the small number of family members (mostly young children) of resident employees; in 1940, such persons were classified as "lodgers."

Source: Same as table 10.

Parents (including parents-in-law) who made their homes with their children increased much more rapidly in the 1940's than did all other persons (table 10).   For those under 65, the age-specific increases among parents were about the same as increases for all persons in the same age groups; for those who were 65 and over, however, where two-thirds of the parents living in their children's homes are found and where the effects of the aging of the population are most evident, the increases were well below average.   Many older persons in 1950 who would have been expected, under former economic conditions, to be living in their children's homes had instead continued to maintain homes of their own.   This fact may be related to the increases in remarriages of middle-aged and older persons during the prosperous 1940's and to increases in various types of benefits for the aged.

Persons classified as "other relatives" in table 10 include sons- and daughters-in-law of the household head, brothers and sisters by blood or marriage, and various other types of relatives not classified elsewhere.   The bulk of these persons (about three-fourths) were between 15 and 64 years

old. As a group, they increased only about half as rapidly as the general population during the 1940's. The number of people in this relationship category was probably at a peak for the decade during the early postwar years when the housing shortage was acute. However, due partly to the fact that doubling diminished toward the end of the decade, the number of "other relatives" increased less rapidly than other groups, on the average, during the 10-year period.

Resident employees include maids, housekeepers, hired hands, and other nonrelatives of the household head who work for him and make their home in his house or apartment. Between 1940 and 1950, the number of such persons fell from about 1 million to only about 450,000, or by more than 55 percent. In fact, the type of service worker who lives in the home of his (or, more often, her) employer decreased more abruptly in number than "private household" workers and farm laborers as a whole. Those who performed domestic service in the employer's home, regardless of whether they lived in it or not, decreased 32 percent; and those classified as farm laborers (except unpaid family workers) and farm foremen, as a group, decreased 23 percent. As indicated above, these changes no doubt stem from such factors as the improved opportunities for more remunerative work in industrial plants and elsewhere, the much wider use of labor-saving devices in the home and on the farm, and the shift into military service of numerous former workers in the categories mentioned.

The decline in number of resident employees was greatest at ages 15 to 44; but even at ages 45 to 64, the number in 1950 was only half as large as it would have been if this group had increased at the same rate as the total population of similar age. Aside from those under 15, the only age group of resident employees that grew approximately as fast as the total was the group 75 years old and over. The huge increase reported for "resident employees" under 15 years of age is due entirely to the inclusion of the children of the employees in this category in 1950 but not in 1940; the reported numbers in any case are inconsequential, since they amounted to only a little over 2,000 in 1940 and 18,000 in 1950.

The age group with the largest proportionate increase in the noninstitutional population in quasi households, as shown by the 1940 and 1950 Censuses, was the group 15 to 24 years old (table 10). The obvious explanation is the much larger number of persons in military barracks in 1950 than in 1940 and the counting of college students at the dormitories where they were living in 1950, but at their parental homes in 1940. Heavy increases were recorded, however, for all other age groups of noninstitutional population in quasi households. These increases were due in large part to a sharp rise between 1940 and 1950 in the number of nonwhite persons reported as members of urban quasi households. Again, the statistical picture is clouded by changes in the definition of urban residence and quasi households; data are not available for an accurate appraisal of the effects of these changes.

Increases from 1940 to 1950 in the reported number of inmates of institutions also reflect, to some extent, differences in coverage and definitions. Partly because of these differences, the changes for inmates differed widely from those for the population as a whole only among the young (under 15) and the old (65 and over). For these age groups, the increases in inmates were about twice as large as those for the general population. The increase for inmates under 15 years of age is subject to error because it was necessary to estimate the institutional population under 14 years old for 1940 (table 10, footnote 4). Other factors may have been offsetting, to some extent. For instance, it is probable that more orphans, in 1950 than in 1940, were placed in foster homes (households) rather than orphanages (institutions). On the other hand, the expansion of facilities for hospitalizing children with physical handicaps, such as rheumatic fever, multiple sclerosis, and muscular dystrophy, probably meant that more children of these types were placed in institutions. More important, however, may have been the failure, in 1940, to include as inmates most of the hospitalized children of these types, as well as those in tuberculosis hospitals. The large increase among older persons in institutions may reflect not only the improved efforts in 1950 to identify and classify as inmates those aged persons who were living in rest homes, but also a real increase in the number of persons being cared for in such homes.

TABLE 12.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF FEMALES IN HOUSEHOLDS BY RELATIONSHIP, BY AGE AND COLOR: 1950

[Percent not shown where less than 0.1]

Color and household relationship	Total females	Under 15 years	15 to 24 years	25 to 44 years	45 to 64 years	65 to 74 years	75 years and over
WHITE							
Total in households......	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Head.........................	8.3	...	1.4	5.6	17.0	31.6	36.7
Wife.........................	46.5	...	35.8	79.6	69.7	41.4	16.5
Child........................	34.9	92.8	52.0	9.1	2.2	0.2	...
Other relative...............	8.1	6.5	7.2	3.6	8.3	22.8	42.0
Lodger.......................	1.8	0.6	3.2	1.7	1.9	3.1	4.3
Resident employee............	0.4	...	0.4	0.3	0.8	0.9	0.5
NONWHITE							
Total in households......	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Head.........................	11.6	...	2.7	14.8	28.4	38.7	36.8
Wife.........................	32.3	...	25.3	60.9	52.6	28.3	11.3
Child........................	35.6	78.0	48.5	8.9	1.7	0.3	...
Other relative...............	14.9	20.0	16.4	7.3	11.4	26.9	45.8
Lodger.......................	4.8	1.9	6.4	7.0	4.7	5.0	5.7
Resident employee............	0.7	0.1	0.8	1.1	1.3	0.8	0.4

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 107.

Color. Differences in household living arrangements of white and nonwhite persons are very pronounced, as the figures for females in table 12 indicate. With few exceptions, the data for the various age groups reflect the fact that family life is less stable among nonwhites than among whites.

Thus, a relatively high proportion of nonwhite women are classified as heads of their households and a relatively low proportion as wives of heads; also, relatively large proportions are classified as "other relatives" of household heads and as lodgers. Since death and separation rates are higher among the nonwhite than the white population, nonwhite women are more often left to live on their own resources or to seek homes among relatives. Another possible explanation for the larger proportions of "other relatives" and lodgers among nonwhite women is a shortage of low-cost housing. Large numbers of nonwhite people moved from farms to smaller cities and from farms and smaller cities to metropolises during the last several decades, and many of these movers found it impossible to obtain separate living quarters at prices they could afford to pay. To meet the high cost of living space, they often moved in with relatives or non-relatives who preceded them. Although the proportion of nonwhite persons living as lodgers declined during the 1940's, it still exceeded that for white persons by a ratio of three to one in 1950. Likewise, the proportion of nonwhite persons who were resident employees declined, but was still half again as large as that among whites in 1950.

Color differences in patterns of household relationship for men are similar to those for women, with one noteworthy exception. The proportion of men who are heads of households is considerably smaller among nonwhites than among whites, whereas the reverse is true for women; these differential patterns, however, tend to go together. Moreover, the gap between the proportions of white and nonwhite men who were heads of households increased during the 1940's; meantime, the gap between the proportions of white and nonwhite women who were wives of heads increased. These facts reflect an increase during the decade in the disparity between the two color groups in the extent of doubling.

Residence. Because urban areas had disproportionately large gains in population during the 1940's, attention is focused on this segment in table 13. The figures show that both the white and nonwhite urban population shared in the greater tendency to live as family members. This tendency is indicated especially by the relatively large growth in the categories head and wife, and by decreases in the categories lodger and resident employee. The percent increase among children and grandchildren of the head was higher for nonwhites than for whites; this fact is probably a consequence, in part, of the larger relative increase in the number of nonwhites than whites of reproductive ages. Again, though more of the nonwhite urban people were living in family groups in 1950 than in 1940, the quite high increases among grandchildren and "other relatives" reflects the fact that doubling-up became more acute among nonwhites during the 1940's.

Finally, it should be acknowledged that the urban definition was made more inclusive in 1950 than in 1940, by the extension of the category urban to include thickly settled fringes outside cities of 50,000 or more and also unincorporated places of 2,500 or more outside any urban fringe.

It is probable that the addition of the urban fringe in 1950 was partly responsible for the observed increase in the proportion of persons living as family members in urban areas, because the fringe areas tend to include a high concentration of private homes and few hotels and lodginghouses. Moreover, the urban fringe contains a larger proportion of white population than the central cities.

TABLE **13.**—PERCENT INCREASE IN URBAN POPULATION IN HOUSEHOLDS, 1940 TO 1950, BY HOUSEHOLD RELATIONSHIP, COLOR, AND SEX

[Figures affected somewhat by changes in definitions; see pp. 13 and 14. Minus sign (−) denotes decrease]

Household relationship	Total urban population			Urban nonwhite population		
	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female
Total in households......	27.2	25.5	28.9	43.8	44.1	43.6
Head........................	36.5	37.5	32.1	47.5	51.3	38.2
Wife........................	41.4	...	41.4	55.8	...	55.8
Child.......................	18.0	16.9	19.2	47.0	47.0	47.0
Grandchild..................	45.1	44.8	45.5	93.0	94.0	92.1
Parent......................	38.8	27.6	42.7	48.6	53.8	47.5
Other relative..............	19.6	17.2	21.8	60.7	62.6	59.1
Lodger......................	-12.0	-16.6	-5.7	-3.9	-3.0	-5.1
Resident employee...........	-53.2	-36.7	-54.6	-35.2	-42.3	-33.4

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 107; and *1940 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Characteristics by Age*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 12.

CHAPTER 2

HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY COMPOSITION

The factors underlying the current structure and past changes in household and family composition are most readily disclosed by an analysis of the components of households—the head, wife, children, other relatives, and nonrelatives. Some components may remain constant through a period of time, while others increase in relative importance, and still others decrease. The head is invariably one of the family members, because, by definition, there is always one and only one head of a family in the statistical sense. Similarly, the family members usually, but not always, include a wife of the head. Inasmuch as the head and wife represent relatively constant factors in family size, an important change in the average size of family usually reflects a change in the number of other family members. For example, if the average size of husband-wife families fell during a given period from four persons to three persons, the decline would amount to one out of every four persons, or 25 percent; however, as the head and wife accounted for a constant of two persons, the variable part fell from two persons to one—or by 50 percent.

Trend in size of household

The long-time trend in the average size of household has been downward. The same is undoubtedly true for the average size of family, as the term is currently defined, but official data are not available to prove it.

In 1790, when the first census of the United States was taken, households comprising four or five persons were the most numerous (table 14 and figure 3). By 1890, the modal size of household had declined to four persons, and by 1900 it was down to three persons. Sometime between 1900 and 1930 it fell to two persons, but the exact time is not known because of the absence of data from the intervening censuses. Between 1940 and 1950, the proportion of households in the modal class of two persons continued to increase. If the central tendency is measured by either the median or the arithmetic mean, the decline in household size between 1790 and 1950 amounted to a little over two persons, or about 40 percent. In 1953, the average size of household reached a low point of 3.28 persons and rose again to 3.34 persons in 1954 and 1955; the average size of family also rose during the early 1950's.

TABLE **14.**—NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS, AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS BY SIZE: 1790 TO 1950

Size of household[1]	1950	1940	1900	1890	1790
All households.............	42,826,000	34,855,000	16,188,000	12,690,000	558,000
Percent.................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1 person........................	9.3	7.7	5.1	3.6	3.7
2 persons.......................	28.1	24.8	15.0	13.2	7.8
3 persons.......................	22.8	22.4	17.6	16.7	11.7
4 persons.......................	18.4	18.1	16.9	16.8	13.8
5 persons.......................	10.4	11.5	14.2	15.1	13.9
6 persons.......................	5.3	6.8	10.9	11.6	13.2
7 persons.......................	2.7	3.8	7.8	8.5	11.2
8 persons.......................	1.4	2.2	5.2	5.9	9.0
9 persons.......................	0.8	1.3	3.3	3.8	6.5
10 persons or more.............	0.9	1.5	4.1	4.8	9.1
Modal size.....................	2.00	2.00	3.00	4.00	5.00
Median size....................	3.05	3.28	4.23	4.48	5.43
Mean size......................	3.39	3.67	4.60	4.83	5.74

[1] For 1950, the number of households with 6 persons or more would have been about 0.4 percentage points larger if it had been shown according to 1940 definitions. For 1940, in turn, the number of households with 10 persons or more would have been about 0.2 percentage points larger if it had been shown according to 1900 or 1890 definitions. The definitions for 1790 and 1940 were apparently about the same.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Housing*, Vol. I, *General Characteristics*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, tables J and 4; *1940 Census of Housing*, Vol. II, *General Characteristics*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, tables II, 9, and 9a; *1940 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Characteristics by Age*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 10; *1900 Census of Population*, Supplementary Analysis, table VII, p. 379, and table X, p. 382; and *A Century of Population Growth from the First Census of the United States to the Twelfth, 1790–1900*, tables 26, 27, and 28.

FIGURE **3.**—PERCENT OF HOUSEHOLDS BY SIZE: 1950, 1900, AND 1790
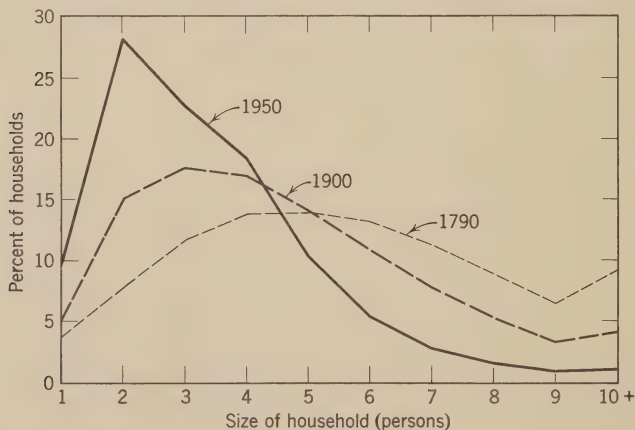
Note: Based on data in table 14.

The causes of the long-time decline in size of household are, of course, numerous and complex. The decline was largely a result of the long-time downward trend of the birth rate, but the decline in the death rate and other factors have also played a part. As industrialization and urbanization increased, and as farming diminished in relative importance in the

economy—and that which remained became increasingly mechanized—standards of living rose and attitudes and values regarding the rearing of many children must have undergone a great change. Increasing numbers of persons decided to have fewer children than their parents had, presumably, in part, so that they could give them a better start in life.[1] In addition, improvements in medical science and public health methods prolonged the lives of parents so that a larger proportion of them survived beyond the time when their children left home; the increase in the number of aging parents must have accounted for much of the increase in the proportion of small households through past decades. Among the many additional factors that may have contributed to the long-time decline in size of household, some can be more readily documented than others. Thus, there may have been a reduction in the number of large three-generation households; there certainly was a sharp decrease between 1940 and 1954 in the number of persons living as lodgers or servants; also, after World War II, there was a sharp increase in the proportion of young people who married, set up small households of their own, and thereby diminished the size of their parental households.[2]

Differences by color and residence. The long-time trends in household size have not always been the same for the white and nonwhite population. Thus, during the first two decades of this century, the average size of white households was about the same as that of nonwhite households and both averages declined in a similar manner. From 1920 to 1950, however, the average size of white households declined by about one person, whereas relatively little change occurred in the average size of nonwhite households (table 15). The differential changes in household size from 1920 to 1950 resulted in part from differential changes in the birth rate. The crude birth rate for the white population dropped from about 27 in 1920 to 18 in the depths of the depression of the 1930's then rose again to 23 in 1950, whereas that for the nonwhite population fell from 35 in 1920 to 25 at the low point of the 1930's then rose to 33 in 1950.[3] (The death rate for the nonwhite population was considerably above that for the white population throughout this span of years.) A rise in the birth rate during the 1940's for both the white and nonwhite population was coupled with a slight rise in size of nonwhite households but a further decline in size of white households.

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[1] The rise in family size between 1950 and 1955 may reflect a new outlook; it may be, among other things, that improved economic and related conditions tend to stimulate the belief that larger families can be maintained without a corresponding decline in living standards.

[2] See the report of the Inter-Agency Committee on Background Materials of the (1948) National Conference on Family Life, *The American Family—A Factual Background,* Government Printing Office, 1949, pp. 8 and 9. See also P. K. Whelpton, "Causes of the Decline in Birth Rates," *Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly,* Vol. XIII, No. 3, July 1935.

[3] National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States—1950,* Vol. I, *Analysis and Summary Tables,* 1954, table 6.02.

TABLE **15.**—AVERAGE POPULATION PER HOUSEHOLD, BY COLOR AND RESIDENCE: 1890 TO 1950

Census year	Total[1]	Color		Residence		
		White	Nonwhite	Urban	Rural nonfarm	Rural farm
1950.........................	3.52	3.46	4.17	3.39	3.62	4.03
White.....................	3.46	...	...	3.34	3.57	3.90
Nonwhite.................	4.17	...	...	3.90	4.29	5.05
1940.........................	3.78	3.75	4.09	3.61	3.78	4.25
White.....................	3.75	...	...	3.60	3.76	4.17
Nonwhite.................	4.09	...	...	3.73	4.01	4.73
1930.........................	4.11	4.09	4.27	3.97	3.99	4.57
1920[2].......................	4.34	4.34	4.31	4.21		4.68
1910.........................	4.54	4.54	4.54	([3])		([3])
1900.........................	4.76	4.75	4.83	([3])		([3])
1890.........................	4.93	4.89	5.32	([3])		([3])

Note: The average population per household is the total population divided by number of households (or households and quasi households). The population figure used in the numerator includes not only persons in households but also the relatively small number in rooming houses, hotels, institutions, and other quasi households. The number of households is used in the denominator for 1950, 1940, 1930, and 1900; for other years, households plus quasi households. Figures in table 16 were calculated in a different manner. (See footnote 1 of table 16.)

[1] Residence classification for 1950 based on new definitions; hence, not strictly comparable with preceding censuses.

[2] The small number in the urban-farm category is included with rural farm for 1920.

[3] Not available.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, table B; Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, tables 34, 47, 94, and 107; *1950 Census of Housing*, Vol. I, *General Characteristics*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, tables J and 4; *1940 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Characteristics by Age*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, tables 1, 4, and 10; *1930 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *General Report*, Chapter 2, table 10; and Vol. VI, *Families*, tables 1 and 12.

The rise in average size of nonwhite households during the 1940's was greater in rural areas than in urban areas. The decade was marked by a heavy loss of nonwhite population from farms and a simultaneous growth of nonwhite population in cities; it seems reasonable to believe that much of the movement was in family groups and that those families that moved from farms were smaller, on the average, than those that remained. The decrease in household size between 1940 and 1950 among whites in all residence groups, on the one hand, and the increase in household size among nonwhites in all residence groups, on the other hand, is related to the fact that the doubling rate was lower among whites, but higher among nonwhites, in 1950 than in 1940. (See Chapter 3, table 37.)

Data from the 1930, 1940, and 1950 Censuses show that relatively large proportions of both small and large households have been characteristic of the nonwhite population.[1] The large proportion of small nonwhite households is probably related to the high proportion of childless nonwhite women. Likewise, the large proportion of big households is related, in part, to the high proportion of nonwhite women with a large number of children and, in part, to the high proportion of nonwhite persons who live as

[4] See Paul C. Glick, "Family Trends in the United States, 1890 to 1940," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. VII, No. 4, August 1942, p. 513. See also U. S. Bureau of the Census, *1930 Census of Population*, Vol. VI, *Families*, table 32.

lodgers. In 1930, a larger proportion of nonwhite households had lodgers, and a larger proportion of those with lodgers had two or more. Moreover, between 1940 and 1950, the number of lodgers in white urban households decreased relatively more than those in nonwhite urban households. (See Chapter 1, table 13.)

Between 1890 and 1910, when immigrants with large families consti- tuted a substantial part of the population in large cities, the average size of households in cities of 100,000 or more was about the same as that in rural areas. From 1930 to 1954, however, the average size of city house- holds fell considerably below that of rural households, and the average sizes in large and small cities drew closer together. The suburban com- munities, which grew rapidly in the decade after World War II, attracted households with children from the larger cities and thereby tended to lower the average size of household in those cities. In 1950, households in the "urban fringe" surrounding large cities were about 8 percent larger, on the average, than those inside the cities. For urbanized areas of 3,000,000 inhabitants or more in 1950, the average size of household was 3.25 persons in the fringe areas and 3.02 in the central cities; for urban- ized areas of fewer than 250,000 inhabitants, the average size of house- hold was 3.41 in the fringe areas and 3.12 in the central cities.[5]
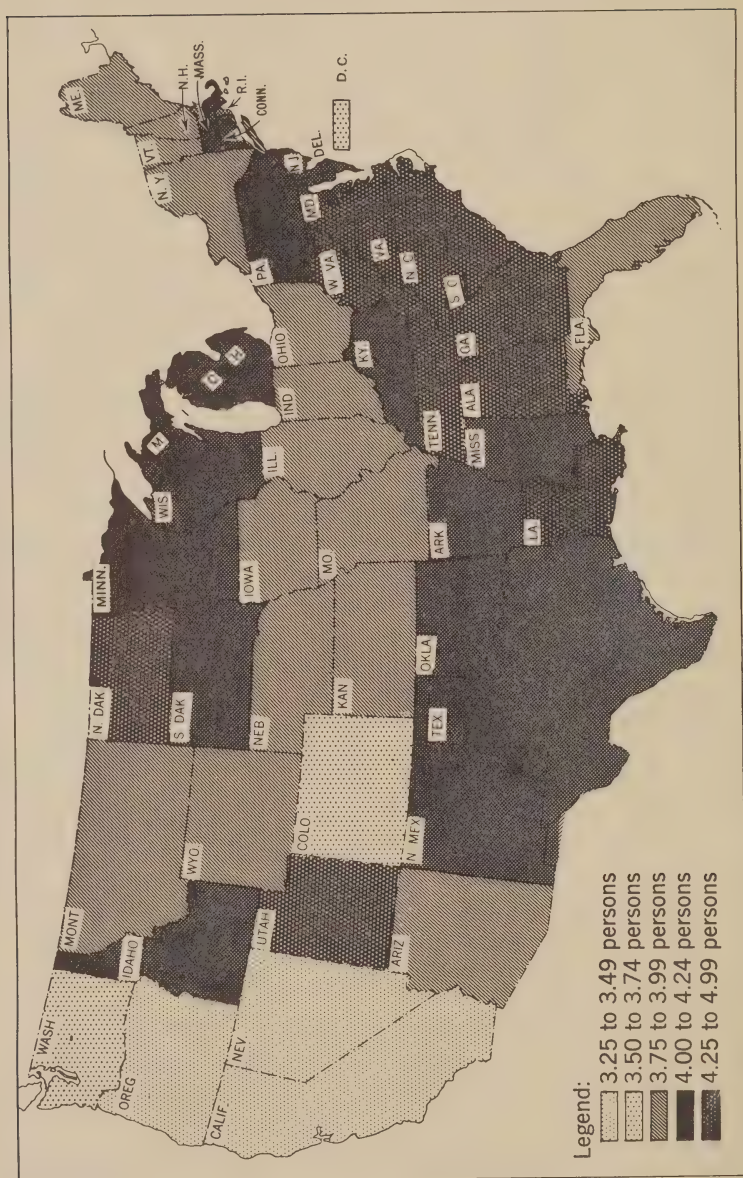
Geographic differences. A striking impression of the universality of the decline in size of household among the States between 1930 and 1950 can be obtained by comparing the three maps, figures 4 to 6, which are all shaded according to the same scale. A pattern of moderate-to-small size of household evidently spread gradually between 1930 and 1950 until it had reached all parts of the country. Only a few scattered States outside the South had an average size of household above 3.50 persons in 1950 and even in the South only one State, South Carolina, had more than 4.00 persons per household (4.01).

Every State showed a decline in household size between 1930 and 1940 and again between 1940 and 1950. The range of variation in average size of household among the States diminished during the 20-year period; in 1930 the State with the largest average (North Carolina) had 1.53 more persons per household than the one with the smallest average (Nevada), but by 1950 the range had dropped to 1.01 person (South Carolina, 4.01, versus Nevada, 3.00).

On a regional basis, the decline in average size of household between 1930 and 1950 was not so great in the West as in the other regions, either absolutely or relatively, but the West had consistently had the smallest households (table 16). In all regions except the West, the decline was about the same (about 0.3 person) during each of the two intercensal periods; in the West, the decline was about the same as in other regions

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[5] *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 5, Chapter A, Characteristics by Size of Place, table 3.

Figure 4.— Average (mean) Size of Household, by States: 1930

Legend:
3.25 to 3.49 persons
3.50 to 3.74 persons
3.75 to 3.99 persons
4.00 to 4.24 persons
4.25 to 4.99 persons

Source: 1930 Census of Population. Vol. VI. Families. table 61.

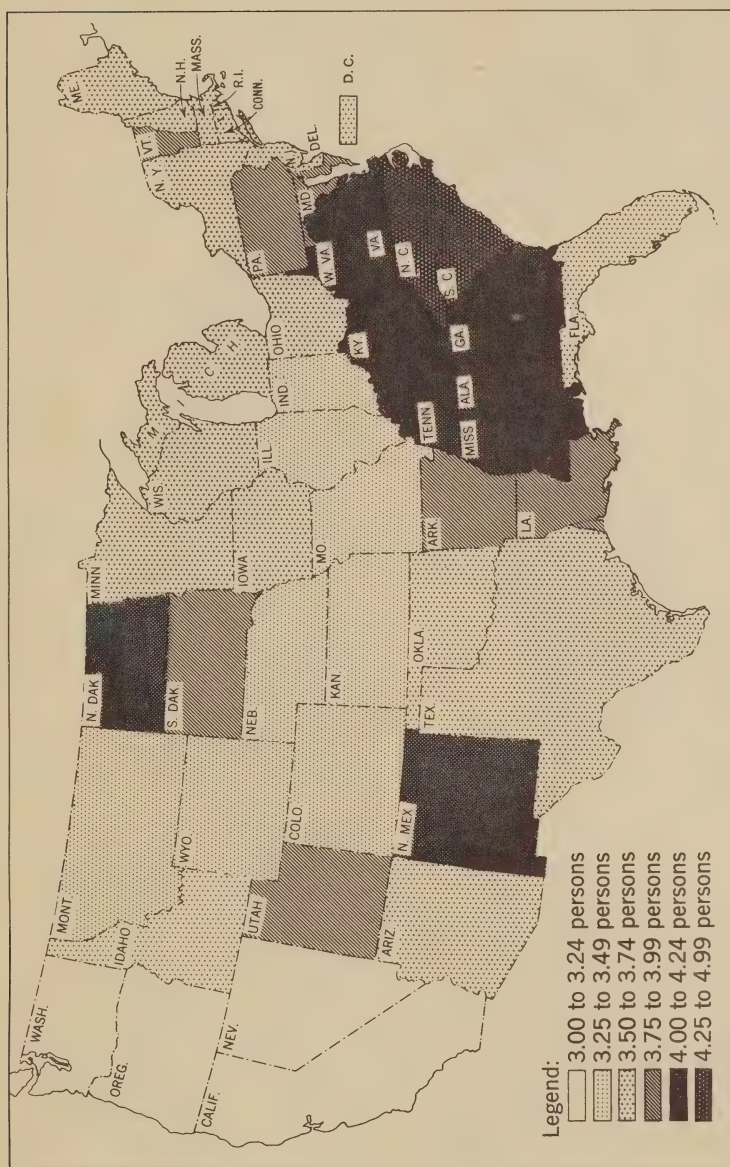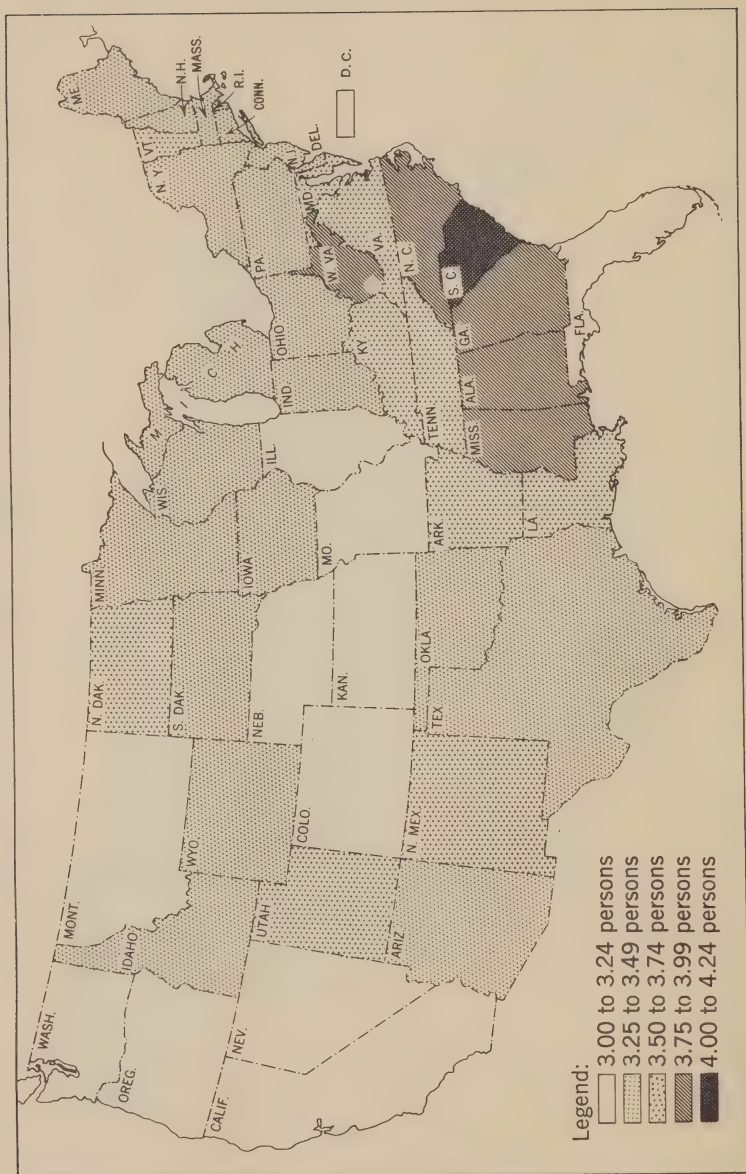FIGURE 5.—AVERAGE (MEAN) SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD, BY STATES: 1940

Legend:
3.00 to 3.24 persons
3.25 to 3.49 persons
3.50 to 3.74 persons
3.75 to 3.99 persons
4.00 to 4.24 persons
4.25 to 4.99 persons

Source: *1940 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Characteristics by Age*, Parts 2 to 4, Alabama to Wyoming, table 12.

FIGURE 6.—AVERAGE (MEAN) SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD, BY STATES: 1950

Legend:

- 3.00 to 3.24 persons
- 3.25 to 3.49 persons
- 3.50 to 3.74 persons
- 3.75 to 3.99 persons
- 4.00 to 4.24 persons

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 69.

during the 1930's but was much smaller (0.1 person) during the 1940's. The smaller change in the West during the more recent period may reflect a change in type of migration to that section of the country. Perhaps the newly established defense industries in the West attracted young skilled workmen, who had relatively large families by 1950. In that region, the growth from 1940 to 1950 in the population 25 to 39 years old was very large (about 40 percent) and the increase in children under 5 years old was extremely large (a little over 100 percent). The largest absolute decline in average size of household between 1930 and 1950 was in the South, but the relative decline was no greater in the South than in the North.

TABLE **16.**—AVERAGE (MEAN) SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD, BY REGIONS: 1930 TO 1950

Area	1950	1940	1930
United States[1]	3.38	3.67	4.01
Northeast.........................	3.37	3.68	4.01
North Central.....................	3.30	3.57	3.90
South.............................	3.61	3.97	4.30
West..............................	3.11	3.22	3.53

[1] Figures represent population in households divided by number of households.

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 69; *1940 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Characteristics by Age*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, tables 10 and 33; and *1930 Census of Population*, Vol. VI, *Families*, table 61.

The rapid and countrywide decline in household size during the two decades before 1950 does not provide a sound basis for assuming that the same pattern of change will continue during the 1950's. As shown earlier in this chapter, by 1955 evidently the tide had already turned, at the national level, toward an increase in number of persons per household. An upward trend appeared likely to continue into the 1960's (Chapter 9).

Trend in size of family

The term "size of family" is commonly used in two different ways. In the literature on fertility, it usually refers to the number of children ever born alive, up to the date of the study; the unit of measurement may be a married couple, a woman in her current marriage, or any ever-married woman. For a woman who has passed her reproductive period, the number of children she has borne is sometimes called her "size of completed family." Such statistics show the extent to which the population is reproducing itself. In the literature on family composition, the term "size of family" generally refers to the entire number of persons who are related to each other and who live together, including adults as well as children; according to current census usage, a family must include at least two mutually related persons. Statistics on size of family based on the latter approach, are useful in the study of the family as a social or economic

unit. In this monograph the term is used as a measure of family composition rather than a measure of fertility.

The decline in family size from 1930 to 1953 can be seen by examining the figures in table 17. Throughout this period, the modal size of family—two persons—did not change, but the proportion of families with only two members grew from 26 to 34 percent. Smaller increases occurred in the proportions with three or four members, and decreases were recorded for all the larger family sizes. In fact, the larger the family size, the greater was the decline. To illustrate, the proportion of families of five persons in 1953 (11.4 percent) was nine-tenths as large as the corresponding figure for 1930 (12.8 percent), whereas the proportion of families of seven persons or more in 1953 (4.9 percent) was only about four-tenths as large as the corresponding figure for 1930 (11.6 percent). These data demonstrate that families of moderate-to-small size have been gradually supplanting large families.

TABLE **17.**—NUMBER OF FAMILIES, AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES BY SIZE: 1930 TO 1953

Size of family	April 1953	March 1950	April 1947	April 1940	April 1930
All families..............	40,832,000	39,303,000	35,794,000	32,166,000	27,980,000
Percent.................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2 persons......................	33.5	32.8	31.7	29.3	26.1
3 persons......................	24.2	25.2	24.5	24.2	22.5
4 persons......................	20.3	19.8	19.9	19.3	18.8
5 persons......................	11.4	11.1	11.4	11.7	12.8
6 persons......................	5.7	5.6	6.2	6.8	8.1
7 persons or more..............	4.9	5.4	6.3	8.7	11.6
7 persons....................	(1)	2.5	(1)	3.8	5.0
8 persons....................	(1)	1.3	(1)	2.2	3.0
9 persons or more.............	(1)	1.6	(1)	2.6	3.6
9 persons...................	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	1.8
10 persons...................	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	1.0
11 persons...................	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	0.5
12 persons or more..........	(1)	(1)	(1)	(1)	0.4
Modal size......................	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Median size.....................	3.18	3.18	3.25	3.35	3.58
Mean size.......................	3.53	3.54	3.67	3.76	4.04

[1] Not available.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 56, table D; No. 55, tables 1 and 2; No. 53, table 4; No. 42, table 1; No. 33, table 7; No. 17, table 3; *1940 Census of Population, Types of Families*, table 3; and *1930 Census of Population*, Vol. VI, *Families*, tables 14, 20, 32, and 34.

Here, as in most of the other trend analyses in this monograph, figures for the war years are not shown in the tables. This has been done partly because of the scarcity of data for the war period. In most cases it is probably not a serious loss, however, except to those concerned with the impact of war on family life. Because the war years were atypical in so many respects, information about them generally does not help to explain the data for years that follow. It is of passing interest, however, that the estimated mean size of family fell from 3.7 in 1940 to 3.5 in 1945, then rose to 3.7 in 1946, remained at 3.7 in 1947, and thereafter declined for several years.

The mean size of family tended to stabilize at about 3.5 persons between 1950 and 1953. This period appears to have marked a transition from a declining family size to a moderately increasing family size. For 1954, the mean size of family from the sample survey was 3.59 persons and for 1955 it was 3.60. The increase after 1953, when the mean size of family was 3.53 persons, was too large to be explained by sampling variation in the basic data. Moreover, projections of average size of family for future years provide further support to the view that the change was fundamental (Chapter 10).

The decline in family size from 1930 to 1953 may be explained by many of the same factors underlying the decline in household size. The family, however, is limited to related persons and therefore excludes lodgers, servants, and other persons not living with relatives. The decline in the number of members per family was not quite so great as the decline in the number of members per household perhaps partly because many lodgers set up households of their own and changed their status to family members.

The reversal, during the early 1950's, of the long-time downward trend in the average size of household and family means that the rate of growth in the number of people had become more rapid than the rate of growth in number of households and families. This significant change engages the attention of research workers in the fields of housing, production, and marketing, as well as students of demography.

Trends among family components

Differential patterns of change between 1940 and 1954 in the various family components can be observed by examining figure 7 (based on the data in tables 18 and 19). The contour of the top line shows that the average size of family declined slightly between 1940 and 1947, fell more sharply between 1947 and 1950, then rose slightly between 1950 and 1954. This over-all picture, however, does not portray which elements of family composition contributed to the change. The other lines in the chart do that.

The section at the bottom of the chart shows that the head represents a constant element of one person per family. Next, because of the fact that about seven out of every eight families throughout the entire period covered by the graph were husband-wife families, the abstract "average family" included a virtually constant component of seven-eighths of one person as the wife of the head. The head and wife together represented about one-half of the family members. Virtually all of the variation in family size arose from changes in the remaining components. Between 1940 and 1947, declines in both the child component (that is, family members under 18 years of age) and the adult relative component (that is, all family members 18 years old and over other than the head or his wife) contributed to the over-all decline in family size from 3.76 to 3.67 persons. Largely because adult sons and daughters departed from their parental homes at

FIGURE 7.—AVERAGE (MEAN) NUMBER OF MEMBERS PER FAMILY, BY TYPE AND AGE: 1940 TO 1954
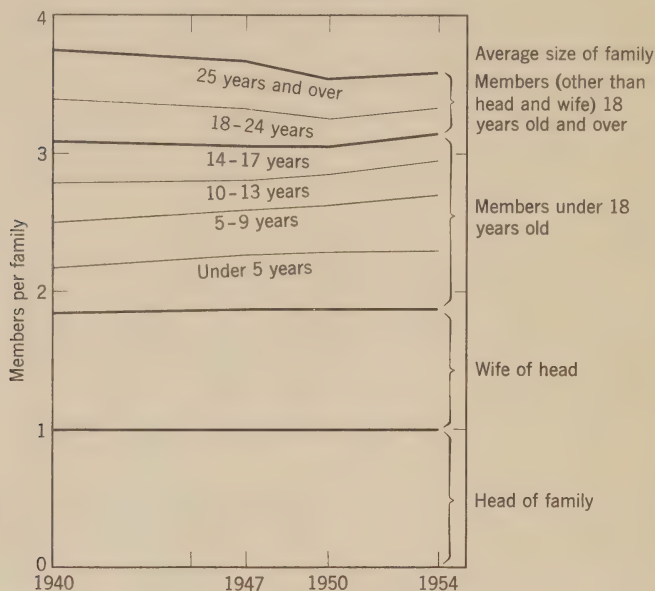
Note: Based on data in tables 18 and 19.

an earlier age than before,[6] the adult relative component changed markedly in relative importance between 1947 and 1950; this element dropped 10 percent in the short span of three years and, mainly as a consequence of this decline, the average size of family fell from 3.67 to 3.54 persons. During the final period from 1950 to 1954, the dominant changes were a 15-percent increase in the number of members under 18 years of age and a further decrease of 8 percent in the number of adult relatives; these changes resulted in a small net increase in the average size of family.

The changing contributions of more detailed family components to the over-all size of family can be seen in figure 7 and table 19. Between 1940 and 1950, the rising average number of members under 10 years old was more than balanced by a falling average number of members 10 to 17 years old. Between 1950 and 1954, a substantial rise in number of members under 10, coupled with a slight increase in number of members 10 to 17 brought a jump from 1.17 members under 18 years old per family to 1.28. The situation can be described in another way. Only 34 percent of the family members other than the head and wife in 1940 were under 10 years old; by 1954, this component had increased to 48 percent. Meantime, those between 14 and 17 years of age constituted a declining proportion of the family members.

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[6] See changes between 1940 and 1950 in population by age and household relationship shown in table 10 of Chapter 1.

TABLE 18.—FAMILIES AND FAMILY MEMBERS BY TYPE: 1940 TO 1954

[Minus sign (—) denotes decrease]

Date	Families	Family members				
		Total	Head of family	Wife of head	Other family members	
					Under 18 years	18 years and over
April 1954...................	41,202,000	147,953,000	41,202,000	36,041,000	52,710,000	18,000,000
March 1950...................	39,303,000	139,133,000	39,303,000	34,440,000	45,875,000	19,515,000
April 1947...................	35,794,000	131,364,000	35,794,000	31,211,000	42,788,000	21,571,000
April 1940...................	32,166,000	120,944,000	32,166,000	26,971,000	39,786,000	22,021,000
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION						
April 1954...................	...	100.0	27.8	24.4	35.6	12.2
March 1950...................	...	100.0	28.2	24.8	33.0	14.0
April 1947...................	...	100.0	27.2	23.8	32.6	16.4
April 1940...................	...	100.0	26.6	22.3	32.9	18.2
PERCENT INCREASE						
1950 to 1954................	4.8	6.3	4.8	4.6	14.9	-7.8
1947 to 1950................	9.8	5.9	9.8	10.3	7.2	-9.5
1940 to 1947................	11.3	8.6	11.3	15.7	7.5	-2.0
AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEMBERS PER FAMILY						
April 1954...................	...	3.59	1.00	0.87	1.28	0.44
March 1950...................	...	3.54	1.00	0.88	1.17	0.50
April 1947...................	...	3.67	1.00	0.87	1.20	0.60
April 1940...................	...	3.76	1.00	0.84	1.24	0.68

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 56, tables D, 4, and 6; No. 55, table 2; No. 33, table 7; No. 21, table 4; No. 17, tables 4 and 11; No. 10, table 5; Series P–25, No. 101, table 1; No. 98, table1; *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 107; Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter D, *Marital Status*, table 1; *1940 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Characteristics by Age*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 12; and *Types of Families*, tables 3 and 8.

TABLE 19.—FAMILY MEMBERS OTHER THAN HEAD AND WIFE, BY AGE: 1940 TO 1954

[Numbers in thousands]

Date	Family members other than head and wife	Under 5 years	5 to 9 years	10 to 13 years	14 to 17 years	18 to 24 years	25 to 44 years	45 to 64 years	65 years and over
April 1954...................	70,710	17,539	16,101	10,436	8,634	7,195	5,665	2,500	2,640
March 1950...................	65,390	15,990	13,025	8,850	8,010	8,695	5,955	2,383	2,482
April 1947...................	64,359	14,319	11,482	8,491	8,496	9,304	7,498	2,417	2,352
April 1940...................	61,807	10,510	10,631	9,249	9,396	10,366	6,367	2,655	2,633
PERCENT DISTRIBUTION									
April 1954...................	100.0	24.8	22.8	14.8	12.2	10.2	8.0	3.5	3.7
March 1950...................	100.0	24.5	19.9	13.5	12.2	13.3	9.1	3.6	3.8
April 1947...................	100.0	22.2	17.8	13.2	13.2	14.5	11.7	3.8	3.7
April 1940...................	100.0	17.0	17.2	15.0	15.2	16.8	10.3	4.3	4.3
AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEMBERS PER FAMILY									
April 1954...................	1.72	0.43	0.39	0.25	0.21	0.17	0.14	0.06	0.06
March 1950...................	1.66	0.41	0.33	0.23	0.20	0.22	0.15	0.06	0.06
April 1947...................	1.80	0.40	0.32	0.24	0.24	0.26	0.21	0.07	0.07
April 1940...................	1.92	0.33	0.33	0.29	0.29	0.32	0.20	0.08	0.08

Source: Same as table 18.

Among adult family members other than the head and wife, an important change started during the postwar years, when marriage rates and household formation rates were especially high. From 1947 to 1950, those 18 to 44 years old diminished by about 12 percent while the total number of family members rose 6 percent. A further decrease of about 17 percent occurred between 1950 and 1954 among family members in the most common military ages (18 to 24); this change occurred in part because the Armed Forces expanded during this period and removed many young men from their homes, and in part because birth rates were low 18 to 24 years earlier.

As a result of the marked increase in the birth rate in the 1940's and early 1950's, more families in the 1950's were concerned with problems of the care and development of small children. Moreover, the pattern of earlier marriage transformed into marriage partners and parents several million young persons who, under former conditions, would have remained single and stayed in their parental homes for a longer period. Perhaps during the early 1950's, the average age of parents of children of dependent age was younger than it had been for many decades and younger than it will be in 1960. Furthermore, the average number of young adults (other than heads and wives) per family was passing through a low phase, to be followed by an increase as children born during the postwar baby boom passed into adulthood.

TABLE 20.—HEADS AND WIVES OF HEADS OF FAMILIES, BY AGE: 1940 TO 1954

Date	All ages	Under 25 years[1]	25 to 44 years	45 to 64 years	65 years and over	Median age (years)
HEAD OF FAMILY						
April 1954..................	41,202,000	1,697,000	19,228,000	14,885,000	5,391,000	44.7
March 1950..................	39,303,000	1,953,000	18,193,000	14,234,000	4,923,000	44.5
April 1947..................	35,794,000	1,643,000	16,190,000	13,480,000	4,481,000	45.1
April 1940..................	32,166,000	1,313,000	14,658,000	12,279,000	3,916,000	45.2
Percent Distribution						
April 1954..................	100.0	4.1	46.7	36.1	13.1	...
March 1950..................	100.0	5.0	46.3	36.2	12.5	...
April 1947..................	100.0	4.6	45.2	37.7	12.5	...
April 1940..................	100.0	4.1	45.6	38.2	12.2	...
WIFE OF HEAD						
April 1954..................	36,041,000	3,507,000	18,713,000	11,344,000	2,477,000	40.4
March 1950..................	34,440,000	3,612,000	18,290,000	10,340,000	2,198,000	39.9
April 1947..................	31,211,000	2,875,000	16,499,000	10,054,000	1,783,000	40.4
April 1940..................	26,971,000	2,882,000	14,287,000	8,409,000	1,393,000	39.8
Percent Distribution						
April 1954..................	100.0	9.7	51.9	31.5	6.9	...
March 1950..................	100.0	10.5	53.1	30.0	6.4	...
April 1947..................	100.0	9.2	52.9	32.2	5.7	...
April 1940..................	100.0	10.7	53.0	31.2	5.2	...

[1] For each date, includes roughly 5,000 heads and 100,000 wives of heads under 18 years old.

Source: Same as table 18.

Although the age composition of the young people in the family underwent some striking changes, the recent changes in the age distributions of family heads and their wives were slight (table 20). The only consistent

trend for both heads and wives from 1940 to 1954 was an increase in the proportion in the age group 65 years and over; no doubt, this increase resulted from the aging of the population and from the general tendency for more of the older couples to maintain living quarters apart from their children. The decline in the proportion of heads and wives under 25 years old between 1950 and 1954 occurred because that age group was the first to be seriously affected by the low birth rates of the 1930's. The median age of head moved downward a fraction of a year between 1940 and 1954, but the median age of wife showed no perceptible trend.

Number of children in the family

At a given point in time, the size of a family, as defined by the Bureau of the Census, is generally a function of the type of family (husband-wife or other type) and the number of sons and daughters of the head who are present. Husband-wife families always include at least two adult members, whereas other families often include only one. Also, husband-wife families have more likelihood of having young sons and daughters of the head in the family. This is true partly because the heads of husband-wife families are younger, on the average, and their children are less likely to have left home. On the other hand, husband-wife families are less likely to include any adults among their members other than the head and his wife and are also less likely to include any family members who are neither sons nor daughters of the head. On balance, husband-wife families usually have more members under 18 years old (regardless of relationship to the head), and other families usually have more adult members (excluding the head but including grown sons and daughters of the head).

TABLE 21.—COMPONENTS OF AVERAGE SIZE OF FAMILY, BY TYPE OF FAMILY AND NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD: APRIL 1953

Type of family and number of own children under 18 years old[1]	All family members	Head of family	Wife of head	Own children under 18[1]	Other members under 18	Other members 18 and over[2]
HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES						
Total..........................	3.60	1.00	1.00	1.21	0.06	0.33
No own children under 18.........	2.49	1.00	1.00	...	0.09	0.40
1 own child under 18.............	3.33	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.04	0.29
2 own children under 18..........	4.24	1.00	1.00	2.00	0.03	0.21
3 own children under 18..........	5.36	1.00	1.00	3.00	0.05	0.31
4 or more own children...........	7.14	1.00	1.00	4.87	0.04	0.23
OTHER FAMILIES						
Total..........................	3.08	1.00	...	0.68	0.28	1.12
No own children under 18.........	2.80	1.00	...	...	0.36	1.44
1 own child under 18.............	2.72	1.00	...	1.00	0.17	0.55
2 own children under 18..........	3.54	1.00	...	2.00	0.06	0.48
3 own children under 18..........	4.47	1.00	...	3.00	0.14	0.33
4 or more own children...........	6.54	1.00	...	4.87	0.04	0.63

[1] Sons and daughters under 18 of the head, including stepchildren and adopted children.

[2] Includes sons, daughters, and other members 18 and over (other than the head and wife).

Source: Unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data.

The data in table 21 show more concretely how the basic family components were distributed among husband-wife families and other families in 1953. There were about 1.27 members under 18 per husband-wife family as compared with 0.96 members under 18 for other families, and own children (sons and daughters of the head) constituted a very much larger proportion of the total number of young members in husband-wife families. Furthermore, the number of members 18 and over per family (other than the head and wife) was only about one-third as large in husband-wife families as in other families (0.33 as compared with 1.12). This difference in number of adult relatives was more than compensated for, however, by the presence of both spouses and of more dependent-age children in husband-wife families, so that the over-all average size of husband-wife families (3.60) exceeded that of other families (3.08).

A family was more likely to have "other members" (members other than the head, wife, and their own children under 18) if there were no dependent-age sons or daughters of the head in the family (table 21). Moreover, the likelihood that there would be "other members" in the family diminished as the number of dependent-age own children of the head increased to about two or three. In families with young sons or daughters still at home, the number of such children tended to eclipse the number of "other members" in the family. Among the "other members" of all ages, the number 18 and over tended to be far greater than the number under 18, in both husband-wife and other families, irrespective of the number of the head's own children under 18 years of age in the family. This preponderance of adults among "other members" is due in part to the fact that a large proportion of the adults were unmarried sons and daughters still living at their parental homes and, in part, perhaps to the various factors which tend to discourage married persons with many children from living with their relatives. Of all the "other members" under 18 years of age in 1950, about three-fourths were grandchildren of the family head; and of all "other members" 18 years old and over, about three-fifths were sons and daughters of the head, and about one-sixth were parents or parents-in-law of the head.[7] It is recognized that the analysis of data on "other members" 18 years old and over would be greatly improved if a distinction were made in table 21 between those who were sons and daughters of the head and all others, but the data required for making this distinction were not available.

In connection with this discussion, it should be recalled that primary individuals (formerly called "one-person families") are not counted as family members. There was a large number of these persons (about 6 million) in 1954. If these persons had been included in the count of

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[7] *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter D, Marital Status, tables 1 and 9.

"other families," the average number of "other members" among such "families" would have obviously been greatly reduced.

Changes between 1940 and 1953. The proportion of families with two or three children (members under 18 years of age) increased from 1940 to 1953 while the proportions of both smaller and larger families declined. From 1940 (when census data were first collected on families by number of members under 18 years of age) to 1953, about 43 or 44 percent of the families contained no members under 18 (table 22 and figure 8). There was a substantial drop between 1940 and 1950 in the proportion with four or more members under 18, followed by a slight rise.

TABLE **22.**—NUMBER OF FAMILIES AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES BY NUMBER OF MEMBERS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD: 1940 TO 1953

[Numbers in thousands]

Number of members under 18 years old	April 1953	April 1952	April 1951	March 1950	April 1949	April 1948	April 1940
All families..............	40,832	40,578	39,929	39,303	38,624	37,237	32,166
Percent.................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No members or 1 under 18......	64.8	65.3	65.9	67.4	67.2	67.5	67.2
No members under 18........	42.9	43.3	42.6	44.2	43.3	43.6	43.6
1 member under 18...........	21.9	22.0	23.3	23.2	23.9	23.9	23.6
2 or more members under 18....	35.2	34.6	34.0	32.6	32.8	32.5	32.7
2 members under 18..........	18.1	18.1	18.1	17.4	17.6	17.2	16.0
3 members under 18..........	9.6	9.1	8.7	8.3	8.1	8.1	8.0
4 or more under 18..........	7.5	7.4	7.1	6.9	7.1	7.2	8.7
4 under 18................	4.0	3.9	3.8	3.8	3.7	(¹)	4.1
5 under 18................	1.8	1.8	1.6	1.6	1.7	(¹)	2.2
6 or more................	1.7	1.8	1.6	1.5	1.8	(¹)	2.4
Average (mean) per family.....	1.24	1.25	1.21	1.17	1.19	1.19	1.24
Average per family with members under 18.............	2.18	2.21	2.11	2.10	2.10	2.10	2.20

¹ Not available.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 56, table 2; No. 55, table D; No. 53, table 4; No. 44, table 7; No. 38, table 13; No. 33, table 7; No. 26, table 7; No. 21, table 4; and No. 17, table 5; Series P–60, No. 15, table 4; No. 12, table 5; No. 9, table 7; No. 7, table 6; No. 6, table 6; and *1940 Census of Population, Types of Families*, tables 3 and 5.

These changes reflect mainly past trends in birth rates and in rates of family formation. An additional factor was the decrease in doubling during the latter part of the 1940's and early 1950's. The increase in families with two or three dependent children is in keeping with the trend, noted in other parts of this study, toward a growing proportion of moderate-size families. The increase from 1950 to 1953 in families with four or more members under 18 was not as great as that for families of three children. Since the period from the birth of the first child until the birth of the last child is longer, as a rule, for families with four or more children than it is for smaller families, it is appropriate to recognize that the smaller increase in the proportion of larger families in this period may represent, in part, a lag and that the increase in the proportion of larger families may continue for a longer time than that of smaller families. There were no

FIGURE **8.**—PERCENT OF FAMILIES BY NUMBER OF MEMBERS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD:
1940 TO 1953
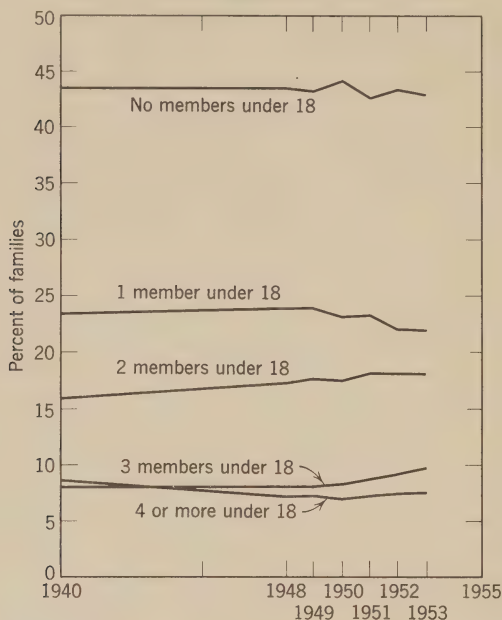
Note: Based on data in table 22.

indications in the early 1950's, however, that larger families would become
relatively very numerous again.

The average number of members under 18 per family was about the
same in 1953 as it was in 1940, after a decline in the 1940's and a rise
in the early 1950's (table 22). As pointed out earlier, nearly half of the
families had no young members; therefore, the average number of young
members per family with young members at home was nearly twice as
large as that for all families. Both types of averages declined between 1940
and 1948, remained more or less stable in the late 1940's, and rose by
1952 or 1953 to about the prewar level. In 1953, the average number
of members under 18 per husband-wife family with such members (2.19)
was only slightly above the corresponding average for other families
(2.04). (See discussion of table 21.)

Own children and other children. Few of the families with no
children of the head in the household included other children among the
family members; and husband-wife families with no children of the head
were less likely to include any young members than were other types of
families (see table 23). The figures indicate that 4.0 percent of the
families in 1953 included no sons or daughters under 18 years of age but
included one or more other members under 18. In 1948, when the

housing situation was worse, the corresponding proportion was 4.7 per-
cent.   The tendency from 1948 to 1953 was in the direction of a declining
proportion of families with children who were not direct dependents of
the head.   This is the type of situation one would expect in a period when
the number of subfamilies was falling.

TABLE **23.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES BY NUMBER OF MEMBERS UNDER 18 YEARS
OLD AND BY NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD: APRIL 1953 AND 1948

Type of family and number of members under 18 years old	1953			1948		
	All members under 18[1]	Own children under 18[2]	Differ- ence[3]	All members under 18[1]	Own children under 18[2]	Differ- ence[3]
All families............	100.0	100.0	...	100.0	100.0	...
No members under 18..........	42.9	46.9	-4.0	43.6	48.3	-4.7
1 or more members under 18...	57.1	53.1	4.0	56.4	51.7	4.7
1 under 18.................	21.9	20.2	1.7	23.9	21.7	2.2
2 under 18.................	18.1	17.0	1.1	17.2	16.1	1.1
3 under 18.................	9.6	9.1	0.5	8.1	7.3	0.8
4 or more.................	7.5	6.8	0.7	7.2	6.6	0.6
Average (mean) per family....	1.24	1.15	0.09	1.19	1.08	0.11
Average per family with members under 18............	2.17	2.16	0.01	2.10	2.09	0.01
Husband-wife families....	100.0	100.0	...	100.0	100.0	...
No members under 18..........	41.4	44.1	-2.7	41.4	44.8	-3.4
1 or more members under 18...	58.6	55.9	2.7	58.6	55.2	3.4
Other families...........	100.0	100.0	...	100.0	100.0	...
No members under 18..........	53.0	65.6	-12.6	57.2	71.0	-13.8
1 or more members under 18...	47.0	34.4	12.6	42.8	29.0	13.8

[1] For this column, the distribution refers to the entire number of family members under 18.

[2] For this column, the distribution refers to the number of own children under 18 of the family head.

[3] Percent of families with specified number of members under 18 minus percent with specified number of
own children under 18.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 53, table 4;
and No. 21, table 4.

Despite the differences between the two types of distributions in table
23, the average number of children per family with children was about
the same for both total members under 18 and own children under 18
(about 2.2 in 1953 and 2.1 in 1948).   This observation grows out of the
fact that the basic difference between the two sets of distributions is in the
proportion of families with no young members of any kind, on the one
hand, and the proportion with no sons or daughters, on the other hand.

Table 24 shows that, although the proportion of husband-wife families
with members under 18 other than the head's own children was rather
small (4.2 percent), husband-wife families were about twice as likely to
have some of these other young members in the family if they had no young
sons or daughters of the head at home (2.7 percent as compared with 1.5
percent).   Among families other than husband-wife families, the chances
were about five to one that a family with other members under 18 would
have no sons or daughters of the head in the home.   Here, the proportion
of families with other young members is much larger (15.1 percent), hence

the relationship pointed out is probably more stable.[8]   Perhaps one of the most relevant generalizations to be made from table 24 is that both husband-wife families and other families almost never (in less than 3 percent of the cases) have a combination of their own children and other members of dependent age.

TABLE 24.—PERCENT OF FAMILIES WITH SPECIFIED NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN AND OTHER
MEMBERS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD, BY TYPE OF FAMILY: APRIL 1953

Type of family and number of own children under 18 years old	All families	Members under 18 years old other than own children			
		None	1 or more		
			Total	1	2 or more
HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES					
Total................................	100.0	95.8	4.2	3.0	1.2
No own children under 18.................	44.1	41.4	2.7	1.9	0.8
1 or more own children under 18.........	55.9	54.4	1.5	1.1	0.4
1 own child..........................	20.7	20.0	0.6	0.5	0.2
2 own children.......................	18.2	17.9	0.4	0.3	0.1
3 own children.......................	9.8	9.5	0.3	0.2	0.1
4 or more............................	7.2	7.0	0.2	0.1	0.1
OTHER FAMILIES					
Total................................	100.0	84.9	15.1	7.8	7.4
No own children under 18.................	65.6	53.0	12.5	6.4	6.1
1 or more own children under 18.........	34.4	31.8	2.6	1.4	1.2
1 own child..........................	16.8	15.2	1.6	0.7	0.8
2 own children.......................	8.9	8.6	0.3	0.2	0.1
3 own children.......................	4.7	4.4	0.3	0.2	0.1
4 or more............................	4.0	3.6	0.4	0.2	0.2

Source: Unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data.

The relative concentration of children under 18 years of age among families and subfamilies with several children is demonstrated in table 25. (Families and subfamilies are combined because, together, they contain all of the children under 18 years of age living with one or both parents.) About 69 percent of the families and subfamilies in 1953 contained no sons or daughters of the head who were of preschool age and 63 percent contained none of school age.   The approximately 4 percent of families and subfamilies with three or more own children of preschool age had 24 percent of all preschool-age children living with one or both parents; also, the 7 percent of families and subfamilies with three or more own children of school age had 38 percent of all school-age children living with one or both parents.

Other 1953 figures in the reports on which table 25 was based show that among families and subfamilies with one or more own sons or daughters under 18 at home the median family or subfamily had 2.3 children; however, among the sons and daughters under 18 the median child was one of 3.1 children living at home.   (The figure 2.3 was based on the dis-

[8] For an illuminating discussion of the difficulties encountered in making comparisons of subgroups with small frequencies, see Leon E. Truesdell, "Residual Relationships and Velocity of Change as Pitfalls in the Field of Statistical Forecasting," *Journal of the American Statistical Association*, Vol. 33, June 1938, pp. 373–379.

tribution of families and subfamilies, and the figure 3.1 was based on the distribution of children.) Thus, the average (median) parent of young children had 2 children at home but, because of the concentration of children in the larger families, the average (median) child had 2 brothers and sisters (not counting himself) in the home.

TABLE 25.—FAMILIES AND SUBFAMILIES BY NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN OF PRESCHOOL AGE (UNDER 6 YEARS OLD) AND OF SCHOOL AGE (6 TO 17 YEARS OLD) AND TOTAL NUMBER OF SUCH CHILDREN: APRIL 1953

Number of own children under 6 and 6 to 17 years old in families and subfamilies	Families and subfamilies		Own children in families and subfamilies[1]	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
UNDER 6 YEARS OLD				
Total..............................	42,800,000	100.0	20,399,000	100.0
No own children under 6..............	29,719,000	69.4	...	...
1 or more own children under 6.......	13,081,000	30.6	20,399,000	100.0
1 own child.........................	7,624,000	17.8	7,624,000	37.4
2 own children......................	3,933,000	9.2	7,866,000	38.6
3 own children......................	1,243,000	2.9	3,729,000	18.3
4 or more...........................	281,000	0.7	1,180,000	5.8
6 TO 17 YEARS OLD			.	
Total..............................	42,800,000	100.0	28,723,000	100.0
No own children 6 to 17..............	26,931,000	62.9	...	...
1 or more own children 6 to 17.......	15,869,000	37.1	28,723,000	100.0
1 own child.........................	7,995,000	18.7	7,995,000	27.8
2 own children......................	4,857,000	11.3	9,714,000	33.8
3 own children......................	1,790,000	4.2	5,370,000	18.7
4 or more...........................	1,227,000	2.9	5,644,000	19.6

[1] Children living with one or both parents.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 55, table 2; and No. 53, tables 1, 4, 7, and 8.

Children in unbroken and broken homes. The relative concentration of children in unbroken homes is evident from the figures in table 26. "Unbroken homes" is used here to mean homes of parents who are not currently separated, widowed, or divorced. In many cases, of course, the homes may have been reconstituted through remarriage of one or both of the parents; data are not available on the distribution of children according to whether the parents had ever been widowed or had ever been divorced.

Of all children under 18 years old living with one or both parents in 1955, 89 percent were living with both parents, 10 percent were living with their mother only, and 1 percent were living with their father only. (These figures are in essential agreement with those for 1953 shown in Chapter 1, table 8.) Of the 5.8 million children living with one parent only, 1.5 million were living with a separated parent, 1.5 million were living with a widowed parent, 1.1 million were living with a divorced parent, 0.5 million were living with their mother while their father was absent from home because of military service, and 1.1 million were living with one married parent while their other parent was absent from home for reasons other than marital discord or military service.

TABLE **26.**—EVER-MARRIED PERSONS BY MARITAL STATUS, SEX, AND NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN
UNDER 18 YEARS OLD IN THEIR HOMES, AND TOTAL NUMBER OF SUCH CHILDREN: APRIL 1955

[Numbers in thousands]

Marital status and sex	Ever-married persons				Children under 18 years old living with one or both parents[1]		
	Number	Total	Percent by number of own children under 18 living with them		Total		Average number per ever-married person
			None	1 or more	Number	Percent	
Total...................	54,190	100.0	54.9	45.1	53,500	100.0	0.99
Men.........................	42,472	100.0	48.4	51.6	48,323	90.3	1.14
Married, wife present......	37,570	100.0	42.5	57.5	47,721	89.2	1.27
Separated.................	746	100.0	94.1	5.9	84	0.2	0.11
Other married..............	809	100.0	89.6	10.4	163	0.3	0.20
Widowed....................	2,357	100.0	94.2	5.8	233	0.4	0.10
Divorced..................	990	100.0	93.3	6.7	122	0.2	0.12
Women[2]......................	11,718	100.0	78.6	21.4	5,177	9.7	0.44
Separated.................	1,400	100.0	54.3	45.7	1,461	2.7	1.04
Husband absent in Armed Forces....................	414	100.0	39.9	60.1	491	0.9	1.19
Other married..............	943	100.0	57.6	42.4	970	1.8	1.03
Widowed....................	7,595	100.0	91.0	9.0	1,259	2.4	0.17
Divorced..................	1,366	100.0	60.5	39.5	996	1.9	0.73

[1] Classified by marital status and sex of parent with whom they were living. Same as number of own children under 18 in families and subfamilies. (Figures for 1955 shown here may be compared with figures for 1953 shown in table 25.) For men "married, wife present," the children were living with both parents; others were living with one parent.

[2] Excludes women living with their husbands.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 67, table 11.

More than half (58 percent) of the married persons living with their spouse in 1955 had one or more children of their own under 18 living with them. The proportion of other ever-married persons with sons or daughters under 18 in the home was lower, except for the relatively young married women whose husbands were in the Armed Forces, of whom 60 percent had children at home. About two-fifths of the married women whose husbands were absent for reasons other than separation or military service and about the same proportion of separated and divorced women had young children in their homes. Of those in remaining marital status classes, only 10 percent or fewer had any young sons or daughters living with them.

The data show that the great majority of children have two parents in their home, although one or the other may not be their natural parent. Among children with separated or divorced parents, the preponderant tendency is for the children to live with their mother. (Some of the unwed mothers probably are reported as separated.) Among children with widowed parents, five out of every six have a widowed mother; more of the fathers die before their children leave home and more of the widowers remarry.

Changes during the family life cycle. Although the figures in tables 25 and 26 present a true picture of the situation at one point in time, it

is only fair to call attention to the fact that many families with no children or only one or two in 1953 had a larger number a few years earlier and still others with a small number in 1953 would have a larger number at a later date. In other words, the data should be interpreted to imply that sometime during the course of the life cycle of the families and subfamilies many more than the stated proportions would have had one, two, or more children of preschool or school age. This thought should serve to clarify the situation theoretically, but there is no information at hand, to the writer's knowledge, that can be used to indicate the extent to which the proportions would be increased by showing them on a lifetime basis. Such information would require knowledge of childspacing, among other things, that is now lacking.

In the preceding discussion as well as in that to follow, it should be apparent that many of the differences between the composition of husband-wife families and other families would be smaller if comparisons were made among heads in specified age ranges. Perhaps the main point to keep in mind here is that heads of husband-wife families are about eight years younger, on the average, than the heads of other families, the median ages being about 44 and 52 years, respectively. In Chapter 4, family composition is treated by age of the head. The present section serves the purpose, however, of introducing some detailed cross-classifications which would be too cumbersome to show by age of the head and other data which are not available by age of the head.

Of course, there are other factors besides age which contribute to the observed differences in the number of children in husband-wife and other families. Such factors as differential rates of widowhood, divorce, and remarriage among social and economic groups of families may have played a part. If socio-economic status of the family, duration of marriage, and age of head were held constant, perhaps most of the differences in number of children per family (between husband-wife families and other families) would disappear.

Adult family members

About one-eighth of the family members are adults (18 years old and over) other than the head and wife. As indicated in an earlier section, about three out of every five of these members are sons or daughters of the family head. Although these persons constituted only a small minority of the family members, they deserve special attention because seven out of every eight of them are in the productive ages, 18 to 64 years; presumably most of those of productive ages might have been living in families (or households) of their own under changed circumstances, whereas almost none of the members under 18 years of age, discussed above, could be expected to shift for themselves. It is perhaps correct to infer that most, but not all, of these adult members are dependent on the head of the family.

Many of them, however, are the chief providers in families where the most feasible way to look after aging relatives is for the younger persons or couples to move in with their elders.

Of all the adult family members (excluding heads and wives) in 1950, about 40 percent were between the ages of 18 and 24 years (table 27 and figure 9). A minority (about one-third) of these young people who had not set up homes of their own were still going to school and a majority (about two-thirds) were working; about one out of three of those who were attending school were also working.[9] As might have been expected, these adult members under 25 years old were mostly single sons and daughters who had not left home. Four out of every five of them had never been married. Of those who had been married, about one-half lived with their own parents and one-fourth with their parents-in-law; the difference may be due, in part, to a tendency for married women more often to live with their own parents than their parents-in-law while their husbands are away from home serving in the Armed Forces, and, in part, to the fact that more young women than young men with broken marriages return to their parental homes. Probably married persons under 25 years old who lived with their parents were usually persons with less work experience than those who had left (and remained away from) their parents' homes.

TABLE 27.—FAMILY MEMBERS 18 YEARS OLD AND OVER OTHER THAN HEAD AND WIFE, BY AGE, WITH PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY FAMILY STATUS: 1950

Family status	Total, 18 years and over	18 to 24 years	25 to 44 years	45 to 64 years	65 years and over
All family members 18 years old and over other than head and wife[1]......	19,318,000	7,925,000	6,259,000	2,526,000	2,609,000
Percent...........................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
In primary families.......................	98.9	99.0	98.9	98.7	99.0
Son or daughter of head................	58.6	83.0	66.7	21.9	0.6
Single...............................	46.2	73.3	44.9	12.1	0.2
Other...............................	12.4	9.7	21.8	9.9	0.3
Son- or daughter-in-law................	6.4	5.2	11.6	3.4	0.2
Grandchild..............................	1.1	2.3	0.7	...	...
Parent or parent-in-law................	14.3	...	0.6	32.9	72.8
Other relative.........................	18.4	8.4	19.3	40.4	25.4
Single...............................	10.0	6.2	9.6	21.7	11.6
Other...............................	8.4	2.3	9.7	18.7	13.9
In secondary families....................	1.1	1.0	1.1	1.3	1.0

[1] Excludes family members attending college away from home, whereas corresponding figures in table 19 include them.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter D, Marital Status, table 1.

Incidentally, a report based on data from the Current Population Survey of the Bureau of the Census for February 1946[10] showed that about 60 percent of the young married couples living with the husband's or wife's

[9] *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, tables 43, 121, and 122; and Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 1, Chapter A, Employment and Personal Characteristics, table 6.

[10] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Population*, Series P–S, No. 15, table 2.

FIGURE **9.**—PERCENT OF FAMILY MEMBERS 18 AND OVER OTHER THAN HEAD OR WIFE, BY FAMILY STATUS AND AGE: 1950
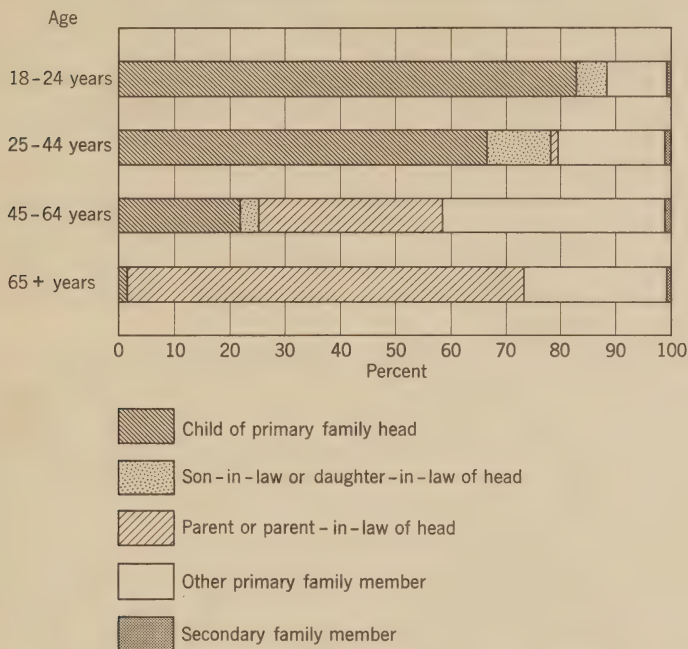
Note: Based on data in table 27.

parents were living with the wife's parents; furthermore, about 55 percent of the older married couples living with one of their children were living with a daughter and son-in-law. Since the women in an extended family of this type are likely to spend more of their time together than the men, the family relationships are no doubt more harmonious, as a rule, when a mother and her daughter live together than they are when an in-law relationship is involved.

Among the 8.8 million adult family members (other than heads and wives) in the economically most productive period of life, 25 to 64 years old, close to one-half were bachelors and spinsters. Single persons of this age range included an above-average percentage of persons with no education, on the one hand, and a much higher-than-average percentage with some college training.[11] This fact suggests that never-married adult family members in the productive age range were more likely than married persons to have been unable to obtain an education when they were young or, more often, were more likely to have obtained a superior education and to have devoted themselves to professional careers where (especially among women) marriage might have been a hindrance to success. About

[11] *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 5, Chapter B, Education, table 8.

one-half million single women 45 years old and over in 1950 were living with their parents or other relatives. These women included the much praised and taunted "maiden aunts" who are reputed to have had significant roles in large families of the past. Comparable data are lacking for earlier decades but it is likely that their numbers fell rapidly in the decades before the 1950's and especially in the decade after World War II.

Nearly three-fourths of the members (other than the head and wife) 65 years old and over were parents or parents-in-law of the family head and most (five out of six) of these parents or parents-in-law were widowed. Perhaps a substantial proportion of the remainder 65 and over living with relatives had no surviving children to whom to turn. Of the parents of the head who were members of the family, only about 12 percent had their spouses living with them.

When an elderly couple and one of their married children (and spouse) lived together, the chances were two to one that the husband in the elderly couple would be regarded as the head.[12] Data from the 1951 Current Population Survey (not tabulated by age of the head) showed that when two married couples shared the same household, the couple with more income was more often the one with the husband reported as the household head.[13] Nonetheless, in the determination of which couple in this situation was regarded as head of the household, other factors, such as which one owned or rented the home and which one assumed the dominant role in the household, were perhaps often more significant than the amount of income received by each of the couples.

Number of adults in the family

In this section, the available data on the frequency of adult family members (other than the head and wife) will be examined; that is, the number of families with none, one, two, etc., such members will be analyzed. After the discussion earlier in this chapter, it should not be surprising to find that the percentage of families with one or more of these adult members declined (from 42 percent to 31 percent) between 1940 and 1953 (table 28). The proportionate decline was especially large for families with two or more such members (from 18 percent to only 9 percent). Furthermore, husband-wife families showed pronounced reductions in the proportions with both two adult members and three or more, whereas other families showed a marked reduction only in the proportion with three or more.

These changes have taken place despite the fact that the aging of the population has increased the number of older persons who would ordinarily have difficulty in managing homes of their own; in fact, the proportion of older persons and couples living independently increased during the 1940's and early 1950's. Thus, the proportion of married couples

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[12] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 17, table 9.

[13] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 38, table 18.

with their own household where the husband was 65 years old and over rose from 94 percent in 1940 to 96 percent in 1954. Furthermore, a small increase (from 48 to 50 percent) in the proportion with their own household was recorded for persons 65 years old and over other than those married and living with their spouse; in 1954, about two-thirds of these persons were primary individuals, that is, were heads of households with no relatives living with them.

TABLE **28.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF FAMILIES BY NUMBER OF MEMBERS 18 YEARS OLD AND OVER OTHER THAN HEAD AND WIFE, BY TYPE OF FAMILY: APRIL 1953 AND 1940

Year and type of family	Total	Number of members 18 years old and over other than head and wife				
		None	1 or more			
			Total	1	2	3 or more
ALL FAMILIES						
1953.........................	100.0	69.1	30.9	21.8	6.9	2.2
1940.........................	100.0	58.1	41.9	23.8	11.6	6.5
HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES						
1953.........................	100.0	75.5	24.5	18.1	4.9	1.5
1940.........................	100.0	66.1	33.9	19.8	9.3	4.8
OTHER FAMILIES						
1953.........................	100.0	23.5	76.5	48.4	21.6	6.5
1940.........................	100.0	16.8	83.2	44.7	23.4	15.1

Source: Derived from unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data for April 1953 and *1940 Census of Population, Types of Families,* tables 3 and 5.

Families were more likely to have adult members, other than the head and wife, if they had some children under 18 who were not sons or daughters of the head or if they were not husband-wife families (table 29). The census definition of a family, however, affects the comparison of husband-wife and other families. A husband-wife family is a family whether it includes other members or not, because it always has at least two related persons living together. An "other family" is a family only if it includes either an adult relative of the head or a relative under the age of 18. Comparison of husband-wife and other families with no members under 18 is really inappropriate in the analysis of adult relatives; "other families" with no children had to include one or more adult relatives of the head to meet the definition of a family.

In 1953, only about one-fourth of the husband-wife families had adult members other than the head and wife, whereas about three-fourths of the other families had adult members other than the head. The small proportion of husband-wife families with adult relatives may suggest, at first, that most adult relatives were in "other families." However, this is not true. The number of husband-wife families is so much larger than the number of other families that even though a smaller proportion of such families have adult relatives, they do have two-thirds of all family members classified as adult members other than the head and wife.

TABLE **29.**—FAMILIES BY TYPE, BY PRESENCE OF MEMBERS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD AND NUMBER OF MEMBERS 18 YEARS OLD AND OVER OTHER THAN HEAD AND WIFE: APRIL 1953

Type of family and presence of members under 18 years old	Total	Number of members 18 years old and over other than head and wife				
		None	1 or more			
			Total	1	2	3 or more
HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES						
Total..........................	35,782,000	27,016,000	8,766,000	6,476,000	1,737,000	553,000
Percent....................	100.0	75.5	24.5	18.1	4.9	1.5
No members under 18..............	100.0	75.5	24.5	18.3	4.7	1.5
1 or more members under 18......	100.0	75.5	24.5	18.0	4.9	1.6
All own children of head......	100.0	78.9	21.1	16.9	3.3	0.9
Not all own children..........	100.0	31.9	68.1	31.0	26.5	10.6
OTHER FAMILIES						
Total..........................	5,050,000	1,188,000	3,862,000	2,445,000	1,090,000	327,000
Percent....................	100.0	23.5	76.5	48.4	21.6	6.5
No members under 18..............	100.0	...	100.0	70.7	23.0	6.3
1 or more members under 18......	100.0	50.1	49.9	23.3	20.0	6.6
All own children of head......	100.0	66.5	33.5	21.6	9.4	2.4
Not all own children..........	100.0	15.4	84.6	26.8	42.4	15.5

Source: Unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data.

Families with only one adult member besides the head or wife were probably most often families with one grown child still at home who had not yet married, or families with a son or daughter in a broken marriage who had returned to his or her parental home. If the returning son or daughter with a broken marriage had children of his or her own, the combination constituted a parent-child subfamily. Other families with one adult member sharing the home included those with a widowed parent or parent-in-law of the family head among the members. When the number of these adults was two or more, the chances were about one out of three that the family contained a husband-wife subfamily. This last inference is drawn from a comparison of figures in table 29 with those in table 30, plus the knowledge that families seldom contain more than one subfamily. On the basis of data for 1947 when the housing situation was acute, only about one household out of every fifteen with subfamilies had more than one subfamily among its members.[14]

The number of subfamilies fell sharply between 1947 and 1953, but the average number of children per subfamily rose during this period. The latter fact is very likely related to differences in duration of marriage; the heads of subfamilies in 1947, soon after World War II, must have had fewer years of married life, on the average, than heads of subfamilies in 1953. A comparison of the proportion of husband-wife families and husband-wife subfamilies with and without own children shows that married couples living as subfamilies less often had young sons and daughters

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[14] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, No. 11, table 9, and No. 16, table 8.

in the home than did other married couples (tables 23 and 30). Very few subfamilies had more than one or two children, perhaps partly because doubling is ordinarily a temporary living arrangement lasting only for the first few months or years of marriage and partly because the resistance to sheltering subfamilies with children probably increases as the number of children in the subfamily increases. Sample data for 1953 on recently married persons showed that 21 percent of the women who had been married less than one and one-fourth years were living with relatives as compared with 14 percent of those married for about three years.[15]

TABLE 30.—NUMBER OF SUBFAMILIES BY TYPE, AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF SUBFAMILIES BY NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD: APRIL 1953 AND 1947

Number of own children under 18 years old	All subfamilies		Husband-wife subfamilies		Parent-child subfamilies	
	1953	1947	1953	1947	1953	1947
All subfamilies............	1,968,000	3,123,000	1,324,000	2,332,000	644,000	791,000
Percent.................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No own children under 18.......	32.6	41.3	48.2	55.5	...	...
1 or more children under 18....	67.4	58.7	51.8	44.5	100.0	100.0
1 under 18....................	38.8	39.2	31.3	28.9	54.9	69.1
2 under 18....................	18.6	13.9	14.0	10.6	27.9	23.4
3 or more....................	10.0	5.6	6.5	4.9	17.2	7.5
Average (mean) per subfamily...	1.15	0.89	0.85	0.70	1.78	1.46
Average per subfamily with children.....................	1.71	1.52	1.64	1.57	1.78	1.46

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 55, table 2; No. 53, tables 1 and 7; No. 17, table 5.

Households containing nonrelatives of the head

The analysis of household composition should include information not only on the related family members but also on the nonrelatives who share the living quarters. In 1950, when about 4 million nonrelatives of the head lived in households, about nine-tenths of them were lodgers who paid rent for their living space or partners who shared the upkeep of the house or apartment, and about one-tenth were resident employees, such as maids and hired hands, who received lodging as a part of their regular pay.[16] Two and one-half million, or 6 percent, of the households, according to the 1950 Census of Housing, had one or more nonrelatives of the head among the household members (table 31). Among households with nonrelatives, therefore, the average number was about one and one-half per household. In 1940, both the number of nonrelatives and the number of households with nonrelatives was larger, but the average number of nonrelatives per household was about the same as in 1950. Thus, in 1940, about 10 percent of the households contained nonrelatives and there

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[15] National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 39, No. 3, table 7. Based on Current Population Survey data.

[16] *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 107.

were 5.5 million nonrelatives in the approximately 3.7 million households with nonrelatives.[17] During the 1940's, a significant change occurred in the distribution of nonrelatives between lodgers and resident employees; about one-fifth of the nonrelatives in 1940, as compared with only one-tenth in 1950, were resident employees.

TABLE **31.**—HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE, PRESENCE OF NONRELATIVES, FARM AND NONFARM: 1950

Type of household and presence of nonrelatives	Total		Urban and rural nonfarm	Rural farm
	Number	Percent		
All households............................	41,594,000	...	35,934,000	5,660,000
Percent.................................	...	100.0	100.0	100.0
Husband-wife primary families with no non-relatives....................................	30,874,000	74.2	73.0	82.0
Other primary families with no nonrelatives...	4,387,000	10.5	10.8	8.9
One-person households.........................	3,824,000	9.2	9.9	4.7
Households with nonrelatives..................	2,509,000	6.0	6.3	4.3

Source: *1950 Census of Housing*, Vol. II, *Nonfarm Housing Characteristics*, Part 1, United States and Divisions, table A–10; and Vol. III, *Farm Housing Characteristics*, table 2.

In 1950, nonrelatives of the head were found in nonfarm households about half again as often, percentagewise, as in farm households. The proportion of nonwhite farm households with nonrelatives in the household was about the same as that for white farm households (4 percent); corresponding information for nonfarm areas is not available, but the proportion for nonwhites must have been much greater than that for whites. In general, nonrelatives had a lower economic status than persons who occupied homes of their own, but no doubt some of those who lived as nonrelatives did so out of choice, for reasons such as the ease of movement from one location to another and the opportunities provided for companionship while living and working away from their parental homes.

Nearly 4 million persons lived entirely alone in their own households in 1950. These one-person households represented 9 percent of all households in 1950; in 1940 less than 8 percent of the households were in this category. Increasing financial security among the increasing number of older persons probably accounts for most of the change. The proportion of one-person households varied widely by residence in 1950, from less than 5 percent of the farm households to nearly 13 percent among renters in the urban parts of standard metropolitan areas.[18] The latter type of household included persons living alone in "bachelor" apartments.

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[17] *Ibid.*, and *1940 Census of Population, Families—General Characteristics*, table 10; also, *Size of Family and Age of Head*, table 5. It was assumed that 800,000 households in 1940 contained employees not covered by the tables cited. A part of the decline in number of lodgers is attributable to a change in definition, as explained in Chapter 1, but this was a minor factor.

[18] *1950 Census of Housing*, Vol. II, *Nonfarm Housing Characteristics*, Part 1, United States and Divisions, table B–10, and Vol. III, *Farm Housing Characteristics*, table 2.

In 1954, proportionately more of the secondary families than subfamilies were of the husband-wife type, yet proportionately fewer of the secondary families than primary families were of this type (table 32).   This fact suggests that family units without their own households were more likely to live apart from their relatives if they were of the husband-wife type but more likely to move in with relatives if they were of the parent-child type.   The situation in this regard changed somewhat between 1947 and 1954.   Relatively more people of the type who lived as husband-wife secondary families in 1947, than of the type who lived as husband-wife subfamilies, changed their mode of living and established independent homes.   The number of parent-child subfamilies changed little during this prosperous period, when housing accommodations were becoming more plentiful.   This fact suggests that improvement in housing and other economic conditions was not the most relevant consideration for these groups. Here the need seems to be not only for financial assistance but also for help with child care.

TABLE 32.—NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY UNITS, AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF UNITS BY TYPE: APRIL 1954 AND 1947

[Numbers in thousands.   Percent not shown where base is less than 200,000.
Minus sign (−) denotes decrease]

Year and type of unit	House-holds	Families			Sub-families	Unrelated individuals		
		Total	Primary	Sec-ondary		Total	Primary	Sec-ondary[1]
1954								
Total..............	46,893	41,202	40,961	241	2,107	9,700	5,932	3,768
Percent...........	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Husband-wife............	76.5	87.5	87.6	68.9	61.9	...	...	...
Other male head[2]........	6.9	3.2	3.2	4.1	4.7	42.0	32.1	57.6
Female head[2]............	16.6	9.3	9.2	27.0	33.4	58.0	67.9	42.4
1947								
Total..............	39,107	35,794	34,964	830	3,123	8,491	4,143	4,348
Percent...........	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Husband-wife............	78.3	87.2	87.6	72.2	74.7	...	...	...
Other male head[2]........	6.4	3.3	3.2	6.9	2.7	45.4	33.5	56.7
Female head[2]............	15.3	9.5	9.2	21.0	22.7	54.6	66.5	43.3
PERCENT INCREASE, 1947 TO 1954								
Total..............	19.9	15.1	17.2	−71.0	−32.5	14.2	43.2	−13.3
Husband-wife............	17.2	15.5	17.2	−72.3	−44.0	...	...	...
Other male head[2]........	28.3	12.6	17.4	...	...	5.8	37.2	−11.9
Female head[2]............	30.3	12.6	16.7	...	−0.6	21.3	46.2	−15.2

[1] Excludes members of the Armed Forces living in barracks in the United States and all members of the Armed Forces overseas; also excludes college students living in the homes of nonrelatives or in dormitories.
[2] For unrelated individuals, refers to sex of the person.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 55, table 2.

More of the secondary individuals were men than women, but more of the primary individuals were women than men.   Secondary individuals were, by and large, young and middle-aged workers who had varied

reasons for not maintaining a home of their own. By contrast, more of the primary individuals were older widows without paid work and retired widowers; many of the primary individuals continued to occupy the homes they once shared with their spouses. The number of primary individuals increased greatly (by 43 percent) between 1947 and 1954, whereas the number of secondary individuals decreased 13 percent. The increase among primary individuals no doubt resulted in many instances from the departure of a subfamily to establish a separate home. Moreover, probably many in 1954 who were the kind of people who would have been secondary individuals in 1947 had meantime set up their own homes because of the greater availability of houses and apartments in 1954.

CHAPTER 3

THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE FAMILY

Between formation and dissolution, families go through a series of characteristic stages which lend themselves to demographic analysis. These stages include marriage, the establishment of a household, bearing and rearing children, marriage of the children, and the later years before the family is finally dissolved. Successive readjustments of behavior patterns are required as the adult members shift their roles from newly wedded persons to parents of small children, parents of older children, older couples without children at home, and surviving widows or widowers. From the viewpoint of the children, the situation is likewise dynamic, with constant but gradual changes taking place as they follow the older generation through the typical life cycle.

The status of the family changes in so many respects from its inception to its dissolution that it is largely an abstraction to speak of "the average family" in the United States as of one point in time. Yet this is done repeatedly in the present study and elsewhere out of the sheer necessity of reducing the data to workable proportions. Moreover, the stages through which families usually pass were reached by married couples at different ages in the late 1940's and early 1950's than formerly, because of "secular and cyclical changes in age at marriage, size of completed family, and length of life." [1] Thus, the dynamics of the situation are compounded by the occurrence of simultaneous changes in the individual family through its lifetime and secular changes in family practices from one generation to the next.

The purpose of this chapter is to present estimates of the times in people's lives under midcentury conditions when they may be expected to reach the turning points in family life and to show how these times have changed in important respects. Some of the materials that are used are fragmentary or were collected for a different purpose; hence the results leave something to be desired. The shortcomings of the data are probably not sufficiently serious, however, to undermine the main findings regarding the past trends toward younger ages at the completion of family building and the longer time that remains for married couples to live together after their children have left home.

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[1] Paul C. Glick, "The Life Cycle of the Family," *Marriage and Family Living*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, February 1955, p. 3.

Marriage

Trend toward younger age at marriage. The median age at marriage in the United States from 1950 to 1955 was about 23 years for the husband and 20 years for the wife. (See table 33 and figure 10.) These ages at marriage were relatively young as compared with those in 1940; during the decade of the 1940's, the median ages at marriage for husbands and wives evidently declined more than a year. This is an unusually large change for a single decade, when seen in a longer time perspective. During the 50-year period before 1940, the median age at first marriage of husbands declined only about two years and that of wives fluctuated downward, upward, and downward again with an over-all decline of only about one-half year, according to the only estimates available for the United States as a whole on a comparable basis for both males and females for dates since 1890.[2]

TABLE **33.**—MEDIAN AGE OF HUSBAND AND WIFE AT SELECTED STAGES OF THE LIFE CYCLE
OF THE FAMILY: 1950, 1940, AND 1890

Stage of the life cycle of the family	Median age of husband			Median age of wife		
	1950	1940	1890	1950	1940	1890
A. First marriage....................	22.8	24.3	26.1	20.1	21.5	22.0
B. Birth of last child.............	28.8	29.9	36.0	26.1	27.1	31.9
C. Marriage of last child..........	50.3	52.8	59.4	47.6	50.0	55.3
D. Death of one spouse[1]............	64.1	63.6	57.4	61.4	60.9	53.3
E. Death of other spouse[2]..........	71.6	69.7	66.4	77.2	73.5	67.7

[1] Husband and wife survive jointly from marriage to specified age.

[2] Husband (wife) survives separately from marriage to specified age.

Source: Paul C. Glick, "The Life Cycle of the Family," *Marriage and Family Living*, Vol. XVII, No. 1, February 1955, p. 4.

[2] The median ages at first marriage shown in table 33 are estimates based on marital status and age distributions from decennial census reports for the respective dates. The method used in calculating the medians was presented in U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports—Population Characteristics*, Series P–20, No. 62; table A in this report also showed median ages at first marriage derived in the same manner for 1947 to 1955 from sample survey figures and for 1900 to 1930 from decennial census figures, as follows:

	1955	1953	1951	1949	1947	1940	1930	1920	1910	1900	1890
Men	22.7	22.8	22.9	22.7	23.7	24.3	24.3	24.6	25.1	25.9	26.1
Women	20.2	20.2	20.4	20.3	20.5	21.5	21.3	21.2	21.6	21.9	22.0

The changes between 1949 and 1955 were relatively small and, since they are based on sample data which are subject to sampling variation, they probably do not indicate any fundamental trend. Corresponding figures can be computed from the basic data shown in *Vital Statistics of the United States* and *Vital Statistics—Special Reports* published by the National Office of Vital Statistics. Median ages at marriage based on vital statistics records should be used with caution in analyzing national trends because the published figures vary from year to year as a result of changes in the list of States reporting and other reasons. For 1950, the decennial census and sample survey figures on estimated median age at first marriage based on data by single years of age were in relatively close agreement; however, they were more than one year below the published medians based on vital statistics figures by five-year age groups for 19 reporting States. The difference would have been reduced, no doubt, if vital statistics data by single years of age had been used. For 1953, the medians from the survey and vital statistics sources, all based on single-year data, differed by only a few tenths of a year. As indicated by the source notes, some of the tables in this section on age at first marriage were based on data from one source and some from another; moreover, age at first marriage was computed in different ways for different tables, as required by the nature of the basic data. Each table is analyzed in terms of its own contribution.

FIGURE **10.**—STAGES OF THE LIFE CYCLE OF THE FAMILY, BY MEDIAN AGE OF THE WIFE: 1890 TO 1950
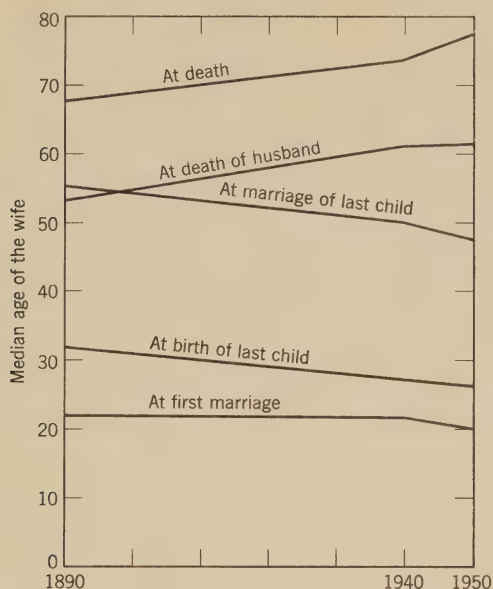
Note: Based on data in table 33.

Additional information on the trend in age at first marriage was obtained for women who had ever been married and who were canvassed in the Current Population Survey in April 1954 (table 34). These women were asked questions on age at first marriage, number of times married, and age at the time of the survey. Their replies provided a basis for tabulating age at first marriage by the period in which the first marriage occurred. For example, it was inferred that a woman who was 50 years old at the survey date in 1954 and who had married for the first time at the age of 20 years had entered her first marriage 30 years before the survey date, that is, in 1924. Inasmuch as the median ages at first marriage shown in table 34 were obtained by a different method from those in table 33 and footnote 2, and as the results in table 34 are subject to bias (because women of a given age who were younger at marriage were exposed to the risk of a broken marriage for a longer time, and for other reasons), the two sets of figures do not agree in detail. Both sources, however, reveal (for women) a pattern of a rising median age at first marriage between 1920 and 1940, followed by a decline from 1940 to 1954. Other things being equal, women who entered first marriage at a relatively young age before 1920 or thereabout were the most likely to survive until 1954. Therefore, the levels of the figures in table 34 for periods before 1920 probably tend to be lower than they would have been if the survival factor were not involved. The figures for those periods, therefore, should be interpreted with considerable caution; these figures are included mainly

TABLE 34.—QUARTILES OF AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE, FOR EVER-MARRIED WOMEN 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER IN FIRST MARRIAGES AND IN REMARRIAGES, BY PERIOD OF FIRST MARRIAGE: APRIL 1954

[Median is same as second quartile. Quartile not shown where base is less than 200,000]

Period of first marriage[1]	Median age at first marriage			First quartile of age at first marriage			Third quartile of age at first marriage		
	All ever-married women	Women in first marriages	Women in remarriages	All ever-married women	Women in first marriages	Women in remarriages	All ever-married women	Women in first marriages	Women in remarriages
Total...............	20.8	21.1	19.0	18.6	18.9	17.3	23.7	24.0	21.4
1950 to 1954...........	20.6	20.6	...	18.6	18.6	...	23.6	23.6	...
1945 to 1949...........	21.0	21.2	18.9	18.8	19.0	17.4	24.0	24.1	21.2
1940 to 1944...........	21.1	21.4	19.3	18.8	19.1	17.5	24.4	24.8	21.8
1935 to 1939...........	21.2	21.5	19.2	18.8	19.1	17.6	24.0	24.4	21.6
1930 to 1934...........	20.8	21.2	19.1	18.6	18.9	17.4	23.6	24.0	21.6
1925 to 1929...........	20.7	21.2	18.7	18.5	18.9	17.1	23.5	24.1	20.9
1920 to 1924...........	20.7	21.1	18.9	18.5	18.9	17.0	23.6	24.0	21.1
1915 to 1919...........	20.7	21.1	19.0	18.6	18.9	17.3	23.7	24.1	21.3
1910 to 1914...........	20.5	20.9	19.0	18.5	18.7	17.8	23.3	23.6	21.4
1905 to 1909...........	20.7	21.0	19.5	18.7	19.0	17.5	23.6	23.9	22.2
1900 to 1904...........	20.2	20.7	18.8	18.4	18.7	17.1	22.8	23.1	20.5
Before 1900............	19.7	20.0	18.7	18.0	18.2	17.0	21.7	22.0	20.4

[1] See text and footnote 3 for statements regarding biases in figures, especially for more remote periods.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 67, table 13; and unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data.

for the purpose of making comparisons between women in first marriages and those in remarriages in 1954.[3]

Stability of marriage in relation to age at marriage. Women who were still in their first marriage in 1954 were about two years older at first marriage, on the average, than women who had remarried, regardless of the period of the first marriage. This fact is consistent with the hypothesis that marriages of young persons are less stable than those of more mature persons.

Further evidence of the greater instability of marriages where age at first marriage is relatively young can be gathered from a comparison of the interquartile ranges of age at first marriage of those with and without broken marriages. (The interquartile range contains the central half of the cases; one-fourth fall below the first quartile and one-fourth fall above the third quartile of age at first marriage.) Thus, for women who had remarried, the range between the first and third quartiles (17.3 years to 21.4 years) is only about four years as compared with about five years

[3] Distributions for periods 1945 to 1949 and 1950 to 1954 tend to be relatively heavily weighted by women born before 1930; in these periods, women born in the low birth-rate years of the 1930's represented a relatively small proportion of women of marriageable age. Distributions for other periods (especially before 1920) tend to be weighted somewhat in favor of younger ages at first marriage, as indicated above. For all periods, distributions probably contain slight biases toward older reported ages at first marriage because some women misreport remarriages as first marriages.

(18.9 years to 24.0 years) for women in first marriages. These figures indicate that a large proportion of women with remarriages had married for the first time at a relatively young age.

Distributions of age at first marriage shown in table 35 bear testimony of the relatively narrow range of ages at first marriage. Among men who married for the first time during the early 1950's, about two-thirds were within an age range of seven years, 19 to 25. Among women, the range was smaller; two-thirds became brides for the first time within the six-year span from 17 to 22 years. The most common ages at first marriage for men were 21 and 22 years and for women, 18 and 19 years; about 20 to 30 percent of all first marriages occurred at these particular ages. At the younger extreme of age at first marriage, less than 10 percent of the men married before they were 19 years of age and less than 10 percent of the women married before they were 17 years of age. At the older extreme, less than 15 percent of the men and less than 10 percent of the women entered their first marriage after they had reached 30 years of age.

TABLE **35.**—Percent Distribution of Persons in the United States with First Marriages Between January 1950 and April 1953 and of Persons in 18 Reporting States with First Marriages in 1953, by Age at First Marriage, by Sex

Age at first marriage	CPS	NOVS	Age at first marriage	CPS	NOVS
MEN			WOMEN		
Total..................	100.0	100.0	Total..................	100.0	100.0
Under 19 years..............	7.7	6.6	Under 16 years..............	3.2	1.4
19 years.....................	5.9	8.3	16 years.....................	6.0	5.0
20 years.....................	9.1	9.1	17 years.....................	8.8	8.0
21 years.....................	10.6	12.9	18 years.....................	13.0	17.6
22 years.....................	10.6	10.8	19 years.....................	13.4	14.0
23 years.....................	9.9	10.2	20 years.....................	11.2	11.4
24 years.....................	9.4	8.7	21 years.....................	9.1	10.8
25 years.....................	7.5	6.7	22 years.....................	7.7	7.8
26 and 27 years.............	9.0	8.8	23 and 24 years.............	9.4	9.2
28 and 29 years.............	6.2	5.5	25 to 29 years..............	9.8	8.7
30 years and over...........	13.9	12.4	30 years and over...........	8.3	6.3
Median age at marriage......	23.6	23.2	Median age at marriage......	20.5	20.4

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 39, No. 3, table 5 (based on Current Population Survey data collected by U. S. Bureau of the Census); and Vol. 42, No. 5, tables B and 4 (based on vital statistics records).

One sidelight on the relatively young age at first marriage in the decade after World War II was an increase in the proportion of college students who married and continued with their education. Nationwide statistics on this subject have not been compiled, to the writer's knowledge; yet, there is abundant evidence from individual colleges that this phenomenon reached significant proportions immediately after World War II, when veterans were receiving financial aid through the "G. I. Bill" to continue their education. Though the number of men receiving such benefits in

1955 was much smaller than it previously was, many colleges reported increasing numbers of married students on their campuses.[4]

Although the trend during the 1940's toward earlier marriage may have come about in part because of the uncertain world conditions, it seems more plausible that this was due largely to better economic conditions, which improved the employment and occupational outlook of young adults and which opened to married women numerous jobs formerly closed to them. Young couples were probably receptive to marriage at a somewhat earlier age than formerly, on the average, because of the prospects that the wife could continue to work outside the home for a period after marriage and again after the children were in or through school. Increases in marriage among college-educated women were particularly noteworthy during the 1940's, as will be shown in Chapter 6. Many of these women were engaged in teaching and clerical positions that were formerly held more exclusively by single women.

Color, residence, and age at marriage. Evidence that age at first marriage rose for both white and nonwhite women between 1925 and 1940 and declined for both groups during the postwar years is given in table 36. The median age at first marriage for white women reached a high point of 21.6 years in the late 1930's, according to the figures in this table, and fell to a low point of about 20.5 years in 1947 and 1948. The indicated changes for nonwhite women were more irregular and less pronounced, if one discounts the spuriously high median for 1945 on the grounds that it may reflect a bias in reporting duration of marriage in a round number (five years). Evidently nonwhite women had a median age at first marriage about one year lower than that for white women until the early 1940's, after which the difference became smaller. Since the medians for nonwhites were already relatively low, the possibility of lowering them still further was perhaps more limited.

The median age at first marriage for rural-farm women was evidently about one year lower than that for urban and rural-nonfarm women during most of the 1930's and 1940's (table 36). It also appears that the difference may have been smaller than one year before 1930 and more than one year during the latter part of the 1940's. For rural-farm nonwhite

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[4] Statistics on married students in 22 widely scattered colleges were reported by Ernest Havemann in an article, "To Love, Honor, Obey . . . and Study," in *Life*, Vol. 38, No. 21, May 23, 1955, pp. 152–166. See also Genevieve Parkhurst, "Shall Marriage Be Subsidized?" in *Harper's Magazine*, No. 1050, Nov. 1937, pp. 570–579, for a statement made some time ago in support of conditions (especially full employment) favoring younger marriages among persons likely to bear children with promise of superior achievement.

According to *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 10, table 9, close to 200,000 married persons 18 to 34 years old who were not in the labor force were attending school in April 1947. Most of these persons must have been going to college. Still other college students, however, were counted as members of the labor force and were not, therefore, recorded as attending school.

women, the median age at first marriage was below 20 years throughout the 1930's and 1940's. By contrast, the median age at first marriage during this period for nonfarm white women was above 20 years. Although nonwhite women marry at younger ages than white women living in the same areas, nonwhite women in nonfarm areas who married during the 1940's reported consistently older ages at first marriage, on the average, than white women on farms. These figures probably reflect differences, on the average, between white and nonwhite women in aspiration levels (as manifested by the ages at which they leave school), in opportunities available for gainful employment before marriage, in the traditional pattern of a more mature age at marriage among white women in the more urbanized Northeast, and in other cultural factors. It is possible that the figures may be affected somewhat by differential movement of the population before or after marriage from farms to nonfarm areas, inasmuch as the data relate to women according to their residence at the time of the 1950 Census rather than at the time of marriage.

TABLE 36.—MEDIAN AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE, FOR WOMEN 15 TO 59 YEARS OLD MARRIED ONCE AND HUSBAND PRESENT, BY DURATION OF MARRIAGE AND COLOR, FARM AND NONFARM: 1950

[Median not shown where base is less than 12,000]

Duration of first marriage	United States			Urban and rural nonfarm			Rural farm		
	Total	White	Non-white	Total	White	Non-white	Total	White	Non-white
Total women married once, husband present.........	20.9	20.9	20.1	21.0	21.1	20.2	20.0	20.1	19.3
Less than 1 year...........	20.8	20.8	20.4	20.9	20.9	20.7	19.6	19.6	18.9
1 year......................	20.5	20.5	20.3	20.6	20.6	20.5	19.2	19.3	...
2 years.....................	20.5	20.5	20.0	20.6	20.6	20.2	19.4	19.4	19.0
3 years.....................	20.7	20.8	20.2	20.9	20.9	20.5	19.6	19.8	18.5
4 years.....................	21.1	21.1	20.4	21.2	21.2	20.6	20.1	20.2	19.6
5 years[1]....................	21.2	21.2	21.3	21.3	21.3	21.6	20.2	20.3	19.8
6 years.....................	21.0	21.0	20.4	21.1	21.1	20.6	20.0	20.1	19.1
7 to 9 years...............	21.0	21.1	20.2	21.1	21.2	20.3	20.1	20.2	19.5
10 to 14 years.............	21.5	21.6	20.3	21.6	21.7	20.5	20.4	20.5	19.4
15 to 19 years.............	21.1	21.2	20.2	21.3	21.4	20.4	20.3	20.4	19.3
20 to 24 years.............	21.0	21.1	19.9	21.1	21.2	19.8	20.4	20.5	20.0
25 years or more[1]..........	20.3	20.3	19.2	20.4	20.4	19.3	19.8	19.8	18.8

[1] See text, p. 58, and footnote 3 for statements regarding biases in selected figures.

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter E, Duration of Current Marital Status, table 2.

The two sets of figures shown in table 37 (from sample survey and marriage records) are in disagreement as to whether recently married white or nonwhite persons were younger, on the average, at the time of first marriage. Perhaps it is sufficient to infer from tables 36 and 37 that color differences in age at first marriage in the period 1947 to 1954 were smaller than in previous years.

Table **37.**—Quartiles of Age at First Marriage, by Residence, Color, and Sex, for Persons with First Marriages Between January 1947 and June 1954

Sex	Total	Color		Residence		
		White	Nonwhite	Urban	Rural nonfarm	Rural farm
MEDIAN						
Male (CPS)...................	24.2	24.2	23.8	24.5	23.8	23.2
Female (CPS).................	20.8	20.8	20.5	21.2	19.9	19.4
Male (NOVS)[1]...............	23.2	23.2	23.6	[2]	[2]	[2]
Female (NOVS)[1].............	20.4	20.3	20.6	[2]	[2]	[2]
FIRST QUARTILE						
Male (CPS)...................	21.4	21.4	21.1	21.6	21.0	20.7
Female (CPS).................	18.6	18.6	18.2	18.1	17.0	16.6
THIRD QUARTILE						
Male (CPS)...................	28.3	28.3	28.4	28.7	27.7	27.2
Female (CPS).................	24.0	24.0	24.2	24.5	22.9	22.2

[1] For persons in 18 reporting States with first marriages in 1953.

[2] Not available.

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, tables 24 and 27 (based on Current Population Survey data collected by the U. S. Bureau of the Census); and Vol. 42, No. 5, table B (based on vital statistics records).

The relatively high median age of urban women at first marriage is probably the most outstanding feature of the urban and rural differentials. Rural-farm men as well as rural-farm women had the lowest ages at first marriage. According to the following data from the same source as the survey data in table 37, the median age at first marriage was one to two years lower in the South, where a relatively large proportion of the population lives on farms, than in other regions:

Sex	South			All other regions		
	Total	White	Nonwhite	Total	White	Nonwhite
Men.............................	23.2	23.2	23.0	24.5	24.5	24.9
Women...........................	19.5	19.4	20.0	21.2	21.2	21.2

Later stages of the life cycle

Establishing a home. Not all married couples are financially able to establish a home of their own immediately after marriage. Perhaps largely for this reason, about one married couple out of every five in the early 1950's postponed setting up a separate home during the first year of marriage, and one out of every eight put off moving into separate quarters for three years.[5]

Sometimes, of course, factors besides economic considerations enter significantly into the situation. Among these factors is service of the

[5] National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 39, No. 3, table 7. Based on Current Population Survey data.

husband in the Armed Forces. Another factor is the available supply of apartments and houses. During the period of housing shortage after World War II, the proportion of young couples without their own living quarters was two and one-half times as large as it was in 1954, by which time the housing situation had greatly eased (table 38 and figure 11). In 1940, after years of depression when housing construction was at a generally low ebb, close to twice as large a proportion of young couples as in 1954 shared the living quarters of others. Throughout the entire period from 1940 to 1954, the doubling rate among nonwhite couples was close to twice that for white couples.

TABLE **38.**—PERCENT OF MARRIED COUPLES WITHOUT OWN HOUSEHOLD, BY AGE OF WIFE
AND COLOR: APRIL 1940 TO 1954

Age of wife and color	1954	1950	1947	1940
Total[1]............................	3.9	6.4	8.7	6.8
Under 25 years.....................	11.6	17.5	29.7	19.0
25 to 34 years.....................	4.3	7.4	10.3	8.2
35 to 44 years.....................	2.6	3.8	3.8	3.8
45 to 54 years.....................	1.8	2.9	2.9	2.7
55 to 64 years.....................	2.4	3.4	3.0	3.6
65 years and over..................	4.2	6.6	7.7	7.0
White..............................	3.7	5.8	7.9	6.4
Nonwhite...........................	6.7	13.8	15.1	11.3

[1] Statistics for 1954 and 1947 were obtained from the Current Population Survey and those for 1950 and 1940 from decennial censuses. The 1950 figure for total married couples without own household, as shown by the Current Population Survey, was 5.6 percent.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 67, table 3; No. 56, tables B and 1; No. 16, table 4; and No. 10, table 2; *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, tables 106 and 107; and *1940 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Characteristics by Age*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, tables 9 and 10.

Couples marrying at a relatively young age are more likely to live with others for a while after marriage. Thus, nearly half of the couples with the husband under 20 years of age in 1950 did not have their own homes (table 39). Among those with the husband in his early 20's—when first marriages usually take place—about one-fifth were living doubled-up and among those in their late 20's, the proportion was only about one-tenth.

Among couples below middle age who were sharing the homes of others in 1950, the younger the couple, the more likely it was to be living with relatives rather than nonrelatives. Thus, about three-fourths of such couples with the husband 25 to 34 lived with relatives as compared with nine-tenths of those with the husband under 20. Since younger couples are the ones most likely to be in difficult financial circumstances, the relatives with whom they live no doubt reason that one of the best ways to help them is to share living quarters with them. Data from the 1950 Census on family status by income show that among couples living with the husband's or wife's parents, 32 percent of the husbands under 25 had incomes in 1949 of less than $1,000, as compared with 25 percent of those

FIGURE **11.**—PERCENT OF MARRIED COUPLES WITHOUT OWN HOUSEHOLD, BY COLOR:
1940 TO 1954
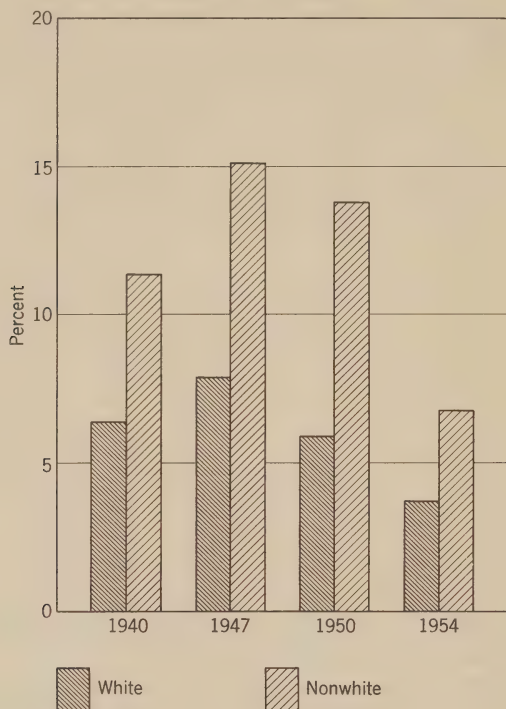
Note: Based on data in table 38.

of the same age living with nonrelatives.   Among couples living with the
husband's parents, 93 percent of the husbands under 18 years of age had
less than $1,000 income, as compared with 61 percent of those 18 and
19 years old, and 32 percent of those 20 to 24 years old.   Incidentally,
many in the younger ages had married during the year before the 1950
Census; those who had spent most of that year in school may have had
little or no income to report for the year (1949).

Only a small minority of those who do set up a home during their first
few years after marriage are in a position to purchase a house.   Although
figures are not available on home ownership by duration of marriage,
some figures are available on the proportions of couples with owned homes
by age of the husband.   In 1950, 33 percent of the married couples with
their own household and with the husband under 35 years old had pur-
chased their homes.[6]   In 1940, only 22 percent of the couples with their
own households and with the husband under 35 had purchased their

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[6] *1950 Census of Housing*, Vol. II, *Nonfarm Housing Characteristics*, Part 1, United States and Divi-
sions, table A–8; and Vol. III, *Farm Housing Characteristics*, table 1.   Limited to households containing
no nonrelatives of the head.

homes.[7] The figures cited are for couples who had established a separate home, but many of the younger couples had not established separate homes. Therefore, the proportion of the total number of married couples with homes they had purchased was still lower for both dates.

TABLE **39.**—MARRIED COUPLES BY AGE OF HUSBAND AND TYPE OF LIVING ARRANGEMENTS: 1950

[Numbers in thousands]

Type of living arrangements	All married couples	Age of husband (years)							
		Under 20	20 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 to 74	75 and over
Total....................	35,000	139	2,059	8,633	8,635	6,915	5,071	2,701	847
With own household[1]..........	32,699	77	1,630	7,803	8,225	6,693	4,916	2,579	775
Without own household........	2,301	62	429	830	410	222	155	122	72
Living with relatives[2].....	1,779	56	364	672	297	137	99	93	62
Living with nonrelatives[3]..	521	6	64	157	112	85	57	29	10
Percent................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
With own household..........	93.4	55.4	79.2	90.4	95.3	96.8	96.9	95.5	91.5
Without own household........	6.6	44.6	20.8	9.6	4.7	3.2	3.1	4.5	8.5
Living with relatives......	5.1	40.3	17.7	7.8	3.4	2.0	2.0	3.4	7.3
Living with nonrelatives...	1.5	4.3	3.1	1.8	1.3	1.2	1.1	1.1	1.2

[1] Husband head of a household.

[2] Husband head of a subfamily.

[3] Husband head of a secondary family.

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter D, Marital Status, table 1.

Childbearing. Vital statistics data on order of birth by age of mother show that the median age of women who had their first child in 1950 was 22.5 years.[8] Since these women had been married for various periods of time (some for a second or subsequent time), and since there was a tendency for age at first marriage to decline during the 1940's, this figure should not be compared with the median age of women at first marriage for 1950 (20.1 years), shown in table 33, for the purpose of estimating the interval between first marriage and the birth of the first child.

Satisfactory information on childspacing intervals was not available at the time of this writing (August 1955). The National Office of Vital Statistics, in cooperation with the Bureau of the Census, had two projects on childspacing in process but the only results obtainable were some simple hand tallies of machine listings.[9] Despite their weaknesses, these

[7] *1940 Census of Population, Types of Families*, table 1.

[8] National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States, 1950*, Vol. II, table 23.

[9] One of the projects was based on a one-percent sample of the 1950 Census returns on fertility and the other was based on Current Population Survey data for April 1954. These studies were to show intervals between marriage and the first child, between the first and second child, and so on, by age of the woman, by selected socio-economic characteristics. The tabulations were designed so as to provide a basis for analyzing changes in childspacing patterns during successive periods of time between 1941 and 1954. The data from these pioneering studies should be a valuable addition to the scant knowledge available about the childbearing phase of the family life cycle in this country.

In these studies, the interval between marriage and the birth of the first child was derived by subtracting the age of the child in completed years at the census date from the duration of marriage in full years at the census date. The interval between the first and second children was derived by sub-

tallies probably provide the most reasonable approximations available in 1955 on childspacing for women in the United States (table 40 and figure 12).

TABLE 40.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY CHILDSPACING INTERVALS, FOR WOMEN 30 TO 34 YEARS OLD MARRIED ONCE AND HUSBAND PRESENT, WITH THREE CHILDREN EVER BORN AND ALL PRESENT IN THE HOUSEHOLD: 1950

Spacing interval	Between marriage and birth of first child	Between birth of first child and birth of second child	Between birth of second child and birth of third child
Total..........................	100.0	100.0	100.0
Less than 1 year..................	4.6	1.8	2.0
1 year...........................	39.1	18.5	13.4
2 years..........................	32.1	31.3	25.4
3 years..........................	12.0	19.6	16.6
4 years..........................	5.9	13.7	16.2
5 years..........................	2.8	6.5	10.1
6 years..........................	2.3	4.2	6.5
7 years..........................	0.4	1.6	4.5
8 years..........................	0.3	1.5	2.3
9 years..........................	0.3	0.7	1.6
10 years or more.................	0.4	0.7	1.4
Median...........................	1.7	2.4	3.1
First quartile...................	1.0	1.7	1.9
Third quartile...................	2.5	3.8	4.6

Source: Unpublished tabulation of 1950 Census data; based on a hand tally made by the Bureau of the Census as a by-product of a childspacing study sponsored jointly by the National Office of Vital Statistics and the Bureau. The first distribution was based on a random sample of 1,600 cases, the second on 1,069 cases, and the third on 1,069 cases.

According to table 40, half of the women 30 to 34 years old in their first marriage, with three children ever born, had their first child in less than 1.7 years after marriage; furthermore, half of all the first births occurred between 1.0 and 2.5 years after marriage and 94 percent occurred during the first five years of marriage. These figures are probably

tracting the age of the second child from that of the first. Intervals between other children were derived in an analogous manner. This approach yields results in terms of "centered intervals"; for example, the spacing interval "2 years" in table 40 is designated by the midpoint of the interval rather than by the lower limit, as in conventional distributions. For that reason, the quartiles, including the medians, shown in the table are one-half year lower than they would have been if the distributions had been conventional. For a discussion of a comparable problem in relation to the median age at first marriage, see *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter E, Duration of Current Marital Status, p. 5.

Several other studies of childspacing for selected areas within the United States have provided valuable information. Data on this subject from the Indianapolis Study were published by P. K. Whelpton and Clyde V. Kiser in "Social and Psychological Factors Affecting Fertility. VI. The Planning of Fertility." *The Milbank Memorial Fund Quarterly*, Vol. XXV, No. 1, January 1947, pp. 209–257. See also Harold T. Christensen and Hanna H. Meisner, "Studies in Child Spacing. III. Premarital Pregnancy as a Factor in Divorce," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 18, No. 6, December 1953, pp. 641–644. Studies made in several foreign countries were reported in 1954. See D. V. Glass and E. Grebenik, "Summary Chapter from The Trend and Pattern of Fertility in Great Britain: A Report on the Family Census of 1946," Her Majesty's Stationery Office, London, June 1954; Louis Henry, "Intervalles entre Naissances (Intervals between Births)," *Population*, Vol. 9, No. 4, October–December 1954, pp. 759–761 (data for Japan); and Siegfried Koller, "The Spacing of Children," paper on German experience presented at World Population Conference, Meeting No. 6, in Rome, August 31 to September 10, 1954.

FIGURE 12.—CHILDSPACING INTERVALS, FOR WOMEN 30 TO 34 YEARS OLD: 1950
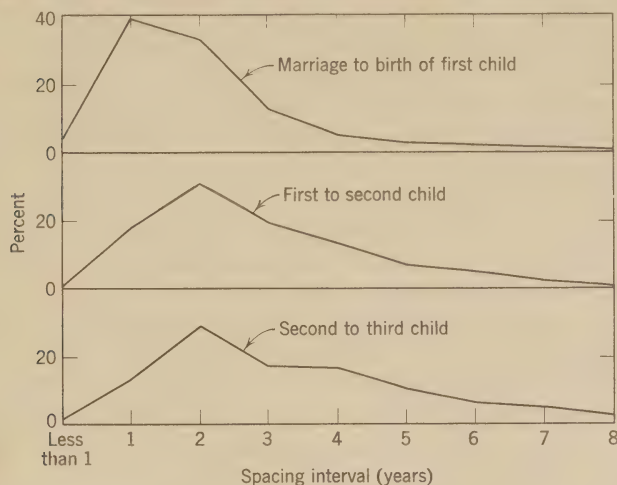
Note: Based on data in table 40.

about the same as those which would be obtained if a wider age range and all orders of births were covered. Since the great majority of women marry before the age of 25 years, most of the first children of the women in question were born between the latter part of the 1930's and the middle of the 1940's. The birth experience was, therefore, about as recent as could be studied with 1950 data if a reasonably adequate amount of time is to be allowed for variations in marriage duration and in childspacing intervals to be shown. Furthermore, since fragmentary data show that women with fewer than three children tend to have longer spacing intervals than women with more than three children, it seems likely that the spacing intervals for women with three children were about average.

Of the women in 1952 who had ever been married and who had just reached the end of the childbearing period (45 to 49 years old), the average number of children ever born was about 2.35.[10] According to vital statistics for 1950 on order of birth, the median age of women at the time of the birth of this hypothetical number of children (2.35) was 26.1 years. This age may be used as a rough indication of the average age of women at the birth of their last child (with less relative error than that involved in using the same source for estimating the interval between marriage and birth of the first child, as discussed above). An alternative to this assumption is presented below. By cumulating the experience shown in table 40, in combination with the median age at first marriage

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[10] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 46, tables 1 and 2. There was little difference between the mean and median number of children ever born and little difference between the figures for all ever-married women and women married and husband present.

shown in table 33, an estimate of 25.3 years as the median age of the mother at birth of the last child is obtained. This figure is probably too low to be applicable to women entering first marriage in 1950, partly because table 40 does not include older women, whose experience is especially relevant in estimating age at birth of the last child; partly because the more fertile women were more likely to have lost a child through death and thereby to be excluded from the tabulation; and partly because higher birth rates in the 1950's were expected to raise the average number of children ever born above 2.35 for those who entered first marriages in 1950. If this average reaches 2.8, the data in table 40 would indicate a median age of about 26.7 years at birth of the last child.

In view of the shortcomings of the data just presented, perhaps it is sufficient to conclude tentatively that the median age of women at the birth of the last child is within the range of 25.5 and 27.5 years and that the last child is most likely to be born sometime during the woman's 26th or 27th year of age. Thus, a majority of married women conclude their childbearing when they are still relatively young.

The average young mother at the midcentury presented an interesting contrast to her grandmother who was a young mother in 1890 (table 33). The grandmother was, on the average, about six years older than the present-day mother when her last child was born, largely because the grandmother married at an older age and had a larger number of children (about 5.4). Thus, the young mother of the current period has about six additional years after her children are in school, during which she can accept employment or help carry community responsibilities. Such activities result in higher family living levels and other social improvements. It appears, therefore, that the intangible values associated with membership in larger families tended to be replaced during the first half of the twentieth century by a different set of values that favored the prospect of surrounding a smaller number of children with a better environment from the economic and civic viewpoints.

Not all women bear children, of course. For decades the trend of childlessness was upward, from a level of about 8 percent of all ever-married women who had completed the childbearing period by 1890 to 19 percent in 1952. However, the 1952 study showed only 15 percent childless among ever-married women 30 to 34 years old, as compared with 26 percent for the corresponding group of women in 1940. It would be reasonable to assume that about two-thirds of the 30-to-34-year group will continue to be childless until the end of the childbearing period. In that event, the level of childlessness (10 percent) would again be down near the 1890 level.

Short-term changes in the birth rate may be expected to fluctuate more widely during the decades ahead than they did between 1900 and 1940 under the impact of economic changes of comparable magnitudes, because knowledge and practice of family limitation have become more nearly

universal. For women born between 1945 and 1949, Whelpton has estimated that the average number of children will fall within the range of 2.0 to 2.8, or from slightly below the current low level to a level about 20 percent higher.[11]

Children leaving home. From the time when childbearing is completed until the children begin to leave home, the number of persons in the family usually remains unchanged, but the roles and requirements of the members undergo vast changes. The mortality rates for children are so low that nearly all children who survive the first year of life continue to live until after the age when they are ready to leave home.

Children are most likely to start shifting for themselves between the ages of 18 and 24 years (table 41). Seven out of every eight children 14 to 17 years of age in 1950 lived with their parents in a household of which one of their parents was the head; the difference by sex of the child was small. Among those 18 and 19 years old, two-thirds of the males and over half of the females still lived in their parents' home, though some had married. By the ages of 20 to 24 years, however, a majority of each sex had left home (59 percent of the men and 72 percent of the women).

TABLE 41.—PERSONS 18 TO 24 YEARS OLD, BY RELATIONSHIP TO HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD, MARITAL STATUS, AND SEX: 1950

[Numbers in thousands]

Age and relationship to head of household	Men				Women			
	Total	Single	Married, wife present	Other marital status	Total	Single	Married, husband present	Other marital status
18 AND 19 YEARS OLD								
Total..................	2,149	2,009	116	24	2,208	1,523	613	73
Percent..............	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Head of household..........	4.0	0.7	59.6	3.3	0.9	0.9	...	7.6
Wife of head..............	...	...	...	...	20.8	...	74.9	...
Child of head.............	68.3	71.4	18.9	53.1	54.5	72.2	9.3	63.8
Other relative of head.....	7.1	6.4	17.4	10.6	9.0	7.4	12.3	16.1
All other.................	20.6	21.4	4.1	33.0	14.8	19.5	3.4	12.5
20 TO 24 YEARS OLD								
Total..................	5,544	3,263	2,059	223	5,866	1,889	3,625	352
Percent..............	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Head of household..........	31.4	2.8	79.2	9.7	2.3	3.8	...	18.7
Wife of head..............	...	...	...	...	52.5	...	84.9	...
Child of head.............	41.3	62.8	7.7	37.8	27.6	65.2	6.0	47.9
Other relative of head.....	8.3	7.1	10.0	11.7	7.7	8.3	6.6	15.1
All other.................	18.9	27.4	3.1	40.8	10.0	22.8	2.6	18.3

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter D, Marital Status, table 1.

If it is assumed that the average family formed in 1950 will have 2.35 children, as indicated above, and if it is further assumed, in the absence of a more plausible hypothesis, that the surviving children will marry at

[11] P. K. Whelpton, "Future Fertility of American Women," *Eugenics Quarterly*, Vol. 1, March 1954, pp. 4–15. See also Whelpton's monograph, *Cohort Fertility: Native White Women in the United States*, Princeton University Press, 1954.

the same age as their parents, it is possible to make a tolerable estimate of the median ages of the parents when all of their children will have married, though it may be conceded that another year or so may elapse before all of the married children will have left home. Such estimates, given in table 33, show that this age for the husband is about 50 years and that for the wife is about 48. If the number of children had been assumed to be 2.8, about one more year would have been added to the parents' ages just cited. Corresponding ages of the parents in 1890 were 59 for the husband and 55 for the wife—if they survived to see their last child marry.

Dissolution of the family. The period of married life after the children were married was greatly extended between 1890 and 1950 because of the trends toward earlier marriage, smaller families, and lower mortality rates up to the time of old age. In addition, more of the older persons remarried after their families were broken by widowhood or divorce; this aspect of marital experience will be discussed in Chapter 6.

Estimates of the ages of the husband and wife when the marital union is likely to be dissolved by death of one spouse, and to be entirely erased by death of the other spouse, for couples entering their first marriage in 1890, 1940, and 1950 are presented in table 33. These estimates are based on the chances of survival from the age at marriage, under mortality conditions existing at the specified dates. Age at "death of one spouse" is the age to which half of the married couples are expected to survive jointly. Age at "death of other spouse" is the age to which half of the husbands (wives) are expected to live, without regard to the age to which their spouse lives. The difference between age at "death of one spouse" and age at "death of other spouse" is somewhat less than the expected period of widowerhood (widowhood) for the surviving partner who does not remarry. It was considered most realistic, however, to maintain a consistent point of departure for all of the estimates shown in table 33, namely, the age at first marriage.

These figures indicate that conditions prevailing in 1950 point to 41 years of married life before the death of one spouse or the other; during the last third of the time that the couple lives together, ordinarily none of their children will be living at home. Because of the remarkable changes between 1890 and 1950, noted above, this entire phase of conjugal life after the children have left home may be experienced by the average married couple of today whereas it was beyond the reach of the average married couple of two generations ago. Thus, in 1890, a couple could look forward to only 31 years of married life and the union had a 50-50 chance of being dissolved by the death of one of the spouses at least two years before the last child married. The added period of married life makes it possible for older couples and their married children to provide mutual assistance and intermittent sociability for several years after the children have left home.

The wife generally outlives the husband because she is usually younger at the time of marriage and is subject to lower mortality rates, age for age, than the husband. Moreover, the wife can expect to live longer after her husband's death if she is the survivor than he can expect to live after her death if he is the survivor. For these reasons, plus the fact that a larger proportion of men than women remarry after a broken marriage, the ratio of widows to widowers in 1954 was 3.3 to 1.[12] The length of time remaining in the final stage of the family life cycle (that is, widowhood or widowerhood) apparently did not change appreciably between 1890 and 1950, but the age period when the surviving partner is likely to be in this phase went up several years.

Among married couples in 1954 who had survived jointly for specified periods of time, those with the wives still in their first marriages had been married considerably longer, as would have been expected, than those with the wife in a remarriage (table 42). For example, one-half the couples with the wife married only once had been married about 18 years or more, as compared with only about 10 years for those with the wife married more than once. The over-all median duration of marriage for all couples, including those with recent marriages as well as those with long-standing marriages, was about 13 years.

TABLE 42.—MARRIED COUPLES WITH WIFE MARRIED ONCE OR REMARRIED, BY DURATION OF CURRENT MARRIAGE: APRIL 1954

Duration of current marriage	All married couples		Wife married once		Wife remarried	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total......................	37,175,000	100.0	31,950,000	100.0	5,225,000	100.0
Less than 5 years.............	6,075,000	16.3	4,625,000	14.5	1,450,000	27.8
5 years.......................	1,300,000	3.5	1,000,000	3.1	300,000	5.7
Less than 10 years............	12,925,000	34.8	10,150,000	31.8	2,775,000	53.1
10 years......................	1,125,000	3.0	875,000	2.7	250,000	4.8
10 years or more..............	24,250,000	65.2	21,800,000	68.2	2,450,000	46.9
25 years......................	625,000	1.7	575,000	1.8	50,000	1.0
25 years or more..............	10,850,000	29.2	10,150,000	31.8	700,000	13.4
50 years......................	150,000	0.4	150,000	0.5	...	...
50 years or more.............	750,000	2.0	725,000	2.3	25,000	0.5

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 23, tables 3 and 4; National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States* (1950), Vol. I, table 5.01; *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 42, No. 3, table A; and unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data for April 1954.

Of popular interest is the fact that in the 1950's approximately 150,000 couples each year celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary and close to three-quarters of a million surviving couples had been married for 50 years or more. These figures should be regarded as approximations, however, because of possible shortcomings in the basic data.

[12] An interesting sidelight on this point was given in the issue of *The Tally of Life Insurance Statistics* published by the Institute of Life Insurance in January 1956. According to this document, of all beneficiaries of ordinary life insurance, 59 percent are wives of the insured person, and 60 percent of the total amount of ordinary life insurance in force was in policies with wives as the beneficiaries. Much of the wealth is passed on to surviving children, however. From such data, it is difficult, therefore, to estimate realistically what proportion of the Nation's wealth is held by widows.

The stages of the family life cycle have been presented above only for persons in their first marriages. However, one-fifth to one-fourth of the persons who married in the 1940's and early 1950's were marrying for the second or subsequent time. These persons, plus many others who did not remarry, had their first marriages broken at one phase of the cycle or another. The nature of the cycle of a remarriage depends on the age of the marriage partners and many other circumstances. Since ages at remarriage are much more varied than those at first marriage, it is probably inadvisable to attempt to describe the "typical" family cycle for couples in remarriages. If research is undertaken in this area, it would be better to prepare various models of the family cycle according to the age at remarriage and previous marital status of the husband and wife.

CHAPTER 4

CHANGES IN FAMILY COMPOSITION DURING THE LIFE CYCLE

One of the best ways to study changes in family characteristics during the life cycle would probably be to analyze data based on the life histories of married persons, but such data have never been collected on a nationwide basis and even if available would present many problems. A more feasible approach would be to study data from a cross section of married couples classified on the basis of duration of first marriage, but available data of this kind are very limited in scope. A third alternative, which probably yields generalizations very similar to those expected from the other approaches, is to examine data on husband-wife families by age of the husband. Data of this third type have been selected for presentation here. Because the range of variation in age at first marriage is not very great, these data provide a tolerable approximation of family characteristics during the successive periods of married life. It is possible, however, that some of the patterns described and general conclusions drawn on the basis of these data would have been somewhat different if they had been based on one of the other methods of measurement.

The several age groups of family heads take on added meaning if they are considered in the perspective of problems that are characteristic of families during a given phase of development. To illustrate, families with the head under 35 years old include most of those with the head subject to a military draft in the event of an international emergency; most of the families with the head 35 to 64 years old are enjoying the period of peak earnings of the head; and families with the head 65 years old and over are faced with problems relating to old age and dependency.

Partly because much of the relevant information is available for husband-wife families only, and partly because space is limited, the discussion in the present chapter (and in the next chapter) will be limited largely to families of the husband-wife type. These families constitute seven-eighths of all families, however, and are more homogeneous than all families. The heads of husband-wife families are more often in the young age groups, and this tendency was accentuated between 1940 and 1950 (table 43). To simplify the wording in the text of this and the next chapter, the word "families" will be used in referring to "husband-wife families."

TABLE **43.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS BY AGE OF HEAD, BY TYPE OF HOUSEHOLD: 1950 AND 1940

Age of head	All households		Husband-wife households[1]		Other households with male head		Households with female head	
	1950	1940	1950	1940	1950	1940	1950	1940
Total..................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under 25 years.............	4.8	4.0	5.2	4.3	4.6	4.4	2.6	2.4
25 to 29 years.............	9.6	9.0	11.2	10.5	5.3	5.4	3.6	3.7
30 to 34 years.............	10.9	11.1	12.7	12.8	5.4	6.1	4.8	5.5
35 to 39 years.............	11.6	11.7	13.0	13.0	6.6	7.3	6.6	7.8
40 to 44 years.............	11.2	11.7	12.1	12.6	7.7	8.5	8.0	9.2
45 to 49 years.............	10.4	11.7	10.8	12.1	8.9	9.7	9.3	11.3
50 to 54 years.............	9.8	10.7	9.7	10.6	9.7	11.0	10.5	11.2
55 to 59 years.............	8.9	8.9	8.4	8.4	10.2	10.7	10.9	10.8
60 to 64 years.............	7.6	7.4	6.7	6.3	10.6	10.3	11.1	10.9
65 to 69 years.............	6.4	6.0	4.9	4.6	10.8	9.9	11.8	10.7
70 to 74 years.............	4.4	4.1	3.0	2.8	8.8	7.8	9.4	8.3
75 years and over..........	4.4	3.7	2.4	2.0	11.4	9.0	11.2	9.0
Median age.................	45.9	46.1	43.3	43.7	55.9	53.9	57.1	54.9

[1] Same as husband-wife primary families.

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, table 1.

Number of children living at home

It is worth repeating that four out of every ten families have no members under 18 years of age living in the home (table 44 and figure 13). This proportion was virtually the same in 1953 as it was in 1940 when data on the subject were first collected. Families without young children at home are concentrated, to some extent, among those with very young heads but more largely among those with heads in middle age or older. Only about 20 percent of the families with the head between 25 and 44

FIGURE **13.**—PERCENT OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES WITH 1 OR MORE MEMBERS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD: 1953 AND 1940
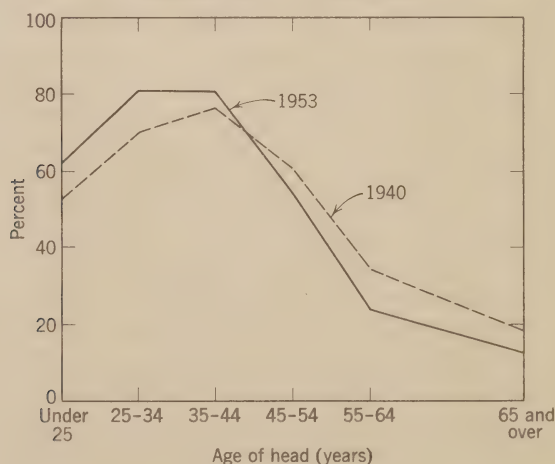
Note: Based on data in table 44.

years old had no young dependents in the home. However, nearly 40 percent of the families with the head under 25 had no members under 18 years old and the proportion with no young members rose from a little over 40 percent to successively higher levels for families with the head 45 years old and over. At ages 65 and over, about seven-eighths of the families had no youngsters in the home and two out of every three of the children in the other one-eighth of the families were grandchildren or other relatives not including sons and daughters of the head.

TABLE 44.—HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES BY AGE OF HEAD, AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY NUMBER OF MEMBERS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD: APRIL 1953 AND 1940

Number of members under 18 years old	Total	Age of head (years)					
		Under 25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
1953							
All husband-wife families..............	35,782,000	1,842,000	8,562,000	8,762,000	7,302,000	5,266,000	4,048,000
Percent..............	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No members under 18.......	41.4	37.2	18.6	18.7	45.7	76.0	87.9
1 or more under 18........	58.6	62.8	81.4	81.3	54.3	24.0	12.1
All own children........	54.4	60.4	79.6	78.3	49.3	17.2	4.0
Not all own children....	4.2	2.4	1.8	3.0	5.0	6.8	8.2
1 member under 18.......	21.9	36.3	27.3	22.9	24.8	14.0	6.9
2 members under 18......	18.9	17.8	29.3	27.2	15.1	5.7	3.2
3 members under 18......	10.0	5.4	16.0	16.6	6.8	2.3	1.2
4 or more under 18......	7.8	3.3	8.7	14.7	7.6	1.9	0.8
1940							
All husband-wife primary families[1]....	26,606,000	1,134,000	6,190,000	6,830,000	6,049,000	3,909,000	2,493,000
Percent..............	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No members under 18.......	40.9	46.5	29.4	23.0	39.8	64.4	81.9
1 or more under 18........	59.1	53.5	70.6	77.0	60.2	35.6	18.1
1 member under 18......	24.1	36.4	31.0	23.7	24.2	18.7	10.4
2 members under 18......	16.9	12.8	22.2	23.2	15.8	8.6	4.3
3 members under 18......	8.6	3.3	9.8	13.3	8.7	4.0	1.7
4 or more under 18......	9.5	1.0	7.6	16.7	11.5	4.3	1.6

[1] Note that the 1940 data are for husband-wife primary families. However, these families constituted 98 percent of all husband-wife families in 1940.

Source: Unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data for April 1953, and *1940 Census of Population, Types of Families*, table 5.

Changes between 1940 and 1953. Between 1940 and 1953, significant changes occurred in the proportions of families with and without dependent children in the earlier and later phases of the family life cycle. Among families with the husband under 45, the proportion with young family members rose and among those with the husband 45 and over the proportion with such members fell. Although there is a gap in the available information because of the lack of a cross-classification for 1940 showing the extent to which the children were own children (sons and daughters of the head), it is nonetheless probably safe to infer, on the basis of auxiliary information, that the change was a result of (1) an increase in the proportion of younger families with sons and daughters at

home and (2) a decrease among older families in the proportion with sons and daughters at home and also in the proportion with other types of young relatives in the home. This observation is consistent with the knowledge that birth rates rose after 1940, that birth rates before the mid-1930's had declined for decades, and that doubling rates were only about half as high in 1953 as in 1940. If the doubling rate does not change significantly between 1955 and 1970, the proportion of families in the later phases of the family cycle with teen-age children of their own to support seems likely to rise in that period, as the wave of children born in the high-birth-rate years after World War II passes through the teen ages.

Between 1940 and 1953, the proportion of families with one member under 18 declined. The drop was most pronounced among families with heads 55 years old and over. Young members of families in this later phase are likely to be the youngest sons and daughters in a large family or to be grandchildren. As large families and doubling declined during this period, proportionately fewer families reached this later phase with members under 18 years of age. Among families with the head under 35 years of age, a substantially larger proportion of the families in 1953 than in 1940 had two or more youngsters in the home. These families were affected the most by the high birth rates of the 1940's and early 1950's.

Patterns of change during the life cycle of the family in the proportion of families with a given number of preschool-age children and of dependent-age children of the head may be traced by examining the data for 1953 shown in table 45. Thus, heads under 25 were more likely to have one child under 6 in the family than to have none or two or more, with about one-half having one child of this age; heads 25 to 34 years old were the most equally distributed according to the various numbers of children under 6; heads at the age of 40 had about a 50-50 chance of having no preschool-age children. Not many families had as many as three children of preschool age; the maximum proportion with three or more was about 10 percent and it was found among families with the head 25 to 34 years old.

Four out of five families with the head between 25 and 44 years of age had one or more own children (including sons, daughters, stepchildren, and adopted children) under 18 living at home. Heads who were either younger or older than that were less likely to have young dependents. Between 50 and 60 percent of the families in this child-rearing period had one or two children to support and about 25 to 30 percent had three or more. Nearly all of the families saw the last of their young children pass the age of 18 while the head was between 40 and 64 years old. Probably a substantial proportion of older families with young children in the home had as the head a man who was more than the average of three years older than his wife; in many such cases, the children were sons and daughters of the wife by a former marriage.

TABLE 45.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES BY NUMBER OF OWN CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS OLD AND UNDER 18 YEARS OLD, BY AGE OF HEAD: APRIL 1953

Number of own children under 6 and under 18 years old	All husband-wife families	Age of head (years)					
		Under 25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
UNDER 6 YEARS OLD							
Total......................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No own children under 6...........	67.5	38.5	30.2	59.5	88.1	98.3	99.3
1 own child under 6...............	18.6	47.7	36.0	23.2	7.6	1.1	0.6
2 own children under 6............	10.1	9.0	24.2	12.8	3.2	0.5	...
3 or more under 6.................	3.9	4.7	9.5	4.5	1.1	0.1	...
UNDER 18 YEARS OLD							
Total......................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No own children under 18..........	44.1	37.7	19.1	20.2	48.7	81.4	95.3
1 own child under 18..............	20.7	36.6	27.4	22.5	23.4	10.7	3.0
2 own children under 18...........	18.2	17.4	29.4	26.8	14.4	4.7	0.8
3 own children under 18...........	9.8	6.4	15.8	16.4	6.6	1.6	0.6
4 or more under 18................	7.2	2.0	8.3	14.1	6.9	1.5	0.3

Source: Unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data.

Color and area differences.   Some wide variations occur among color and area groups in the proportion of families with young dependents at successive stages of the life cycle.   Despite the fact that fertility rates are higher for nonwhite couples than for white couples,[1] a smaller proportion of the nonwhite heads of families in 1950 had surviving sons or daughters under 18 years old still living with them, the figures being 55 percent for white families and 50 percent for nonwhite families (table 46). The largest difference between the proportions of white and nonwhite families with young dependents appeared when the father was 35 to 44 years old.   During this period the children were beginning to leave home. Figures on household relationship and family status[2] show that much larger proportions of nonwhite than white youths in their teens lived apart from relatives or lived in the families of relatives other than their parents. The same phenomenon also occurred among younger persons but to a lesser extent.

As a result of tendencies cited here, the main burden of rearing their

[1] *1950 Census of Population,* Vol. IV, *Special Reports,* Part 5, Chapter C, Fertility, tables 1 and 34. Data in terms of life-time fertility, that is, children ever born, show the nonwhite women consistently more fertile than white women, but data in terms of current fertility, that is, children under 5 years old living with their mothers, show nonwhite women more fertile only at the younger ages.   Data on current fertility for nonwhite women are affected adversely by the higher mortality rates among their children, the larger proportion of nonwhite children not living with their mothers, and larger biases in reporting ages of nonwhite children.   If the current fertility rates for all nonwhite women of reproductive ages were corrected by about 8 percent for these factors, they also would imply higher birth rates for nonwhite than white women.   The report cited here and also U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports,* Series P–20, No. 46, show fertility rates not only by color but also by occupation of the husband (and the latter report also shows fertility rates by income of the husband), by age of woman.   Occupation and income data are not available for 1950 on families by number of children, by age of head.

[2] *1950 Census of Population,* Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population,* Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 107; and Vol. IV, *Special Reports,* Part 2, Chapter D, Marital Status, tables 1 and 2.

own children during the stages before the family head reaches middle age evidently falls on a smaller proportion of nonwhite than white parents; at the same time, this burden is borne (or at least shared) by persons other than the parents in a larger proportion of nonwhite families because of the higher doubling rates among nonwhites and because of the higher incidence of broken marriages and of placement of children with relatives among the nonwhite population.

TABLE **46.**—PERCENT OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES WITH ONE OR MORE OWN CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD, BY AGE OF HEAD AND COLOR, BY REGIONS, FARM AND NONFARM: 1950

Area and color	All husband-wife families	Age of head (years)			
		Under 35	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
UNITED STATES					
Total......................	54.7	73.4	77.6	37.2	5.8
White...........................	55.1	74.1	79.3	37.2	5.3
Nonwhite........................	49.8	65.8	59.4	36.8	13.6
NORTH AND WEST					
Urban and rural nonfarm......	52.8	72.6	77.0	34.1	4.1
White...........................	53.2	73.2	78.3	34.3	4.0
Nonwhite........................	44.6	60.3	51.9	29.3	9.2
Rural farm..................	58.8	81.8	86.2	46.3	6.9
White...........................	58.8	81.9	86.3	46.2	6.7
Nonwhite........................	62.1	77.7	78.5	52.8	24.4
SOUTH					
Urban and rural nonfarm......	56.1	71.7	74.1	37.2	7.2
White...........................	57.6	72.7	77.5	38.0	6.3
Nonwhite........................	48.1	66.0	57.1	33.4	11.8
Rural farm..................	62.1	81.3	85.1	52.3	13.7
White...........................	62.1	82.5	86.7	51.5	12.1
Nonwhite........................	62.4	77.6	79.3	55.2	19.8

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, tables 4 and 5.

Among families with the head in middle age, which is interpreted here as 45 to 64 years old, about the same proportion (37 percent) of white and nonwhite families in the country as a whole in 1950 had young children of their own at home. This over-all similarity, however, conceals some noteworthy color differences among farm and nonfarm families which are shown in table 46. In nonfarm areas both in and out of the South, the percentage of middle-age nonwhite families with young sons and daughters in their homes was significantly lower than that for white families. On farms, the reverse was true—relatively more nonwhite than white families with the head in middle age included children of the head. The same pattern of differences carried over to older families but with the differences greatly intensified. In the South, for instance, only 6 percent of the white nonfarm families with the head 65 years old and over had sons and daughters under 18 in their homes, whereas 20 percent of the nonwhite farm families with the head in this older range had children living at home. In the North and West the differences were even greater,

but the comparison is less meaningful because nonwhite families in these regions are concentrated in nonfarm areas.

These observations reflect the fact that nonwhite families, especially on farms, continue childbearing for a longer period of years than white families, on the average. The data may also reflect a practice among some nonwhite parents of having their children reared by the grandparents on a farm while the parents work in the city; some of these children may be misreported as sons and daughters of the grandparents.

Patterns of child dependency by age of the family head varied remarkably little between the North and West (table 47). Both white and nonwhite families in the South, however, were more likely than families in other regions to have young sons and daughters at home while the parents passed through middle age and into old age. This particular pattern persisted within urban-rural residence groups; therefore, it is not explainable in terms of the larger proportion of farm population in the South.

TABLE 47.—PERCENT OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES WITH ONE OR MORE OWN CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD, BY AGE OF HEAD AND COLOR, BY REGIONS, URBAN AND RURAL: 1950

Area and color	All husband-wife families	Age of head (years)			
		Under 35	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
United States..............	54.7	73.4	77.6	37.2	5.8
Urban............................	52.2	70.4	74.9	33.4	4.1
Rural nonfarm....................	58.6	78.0	80.5	40.2	6.7
Rural farm.......................	60.4	81.6	85.7	49.1	10.3
Northeast.................	53.4	73.4	79.0	35.6	4.4
North Central................	53.2	73.4	78.1	35.9	4.4
South........................	57.5	73.4	76.7	41.5	9.3
Urban............................	53.3	68.6	71.2	34.2	5.5
Rural nonfarm....................	61.7	77.6	79.9	43.9	9.9
Rural farm.......................	62.1	81.3	85.1	52.3	13.7
White.....................	58.6	74.2	79.6	41.7	8.1
Urban............................	54.8	69.7	75.1	34.9	4.7
Rural nonfarm....................	62.8	78.1	82.1	44.6	8.9
Rural farm.......................	62.1	82.5	86.7	51.5	12.1
Nonwhite.................	52.3	69.0	63.3	40.5	14.8
Urban............................	45.5	62.7	53.4	30.8	9.8
Rural nonfarm....................	54.5	74.0	66.8	40.0	14.8
Rural farm.......................	62.4	77.6	79.3	55.2	19.8
West........................	54.2	73.3	75.7	34.6	4.9

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, tables 4 and 5.

At each age level of the head, urban families were the least likely to have young dependents, rural-farm families were the most likely to have them, and rural-nonfarm families occupied an intermediate position. The same was true of both white and nonwhite families in the South. As white families in the South passed through the earlier stages of their life cycle, the proportion with children tended to be only slightly higher than that for families in the North and West. Nonwhite families in the South, on the other hand, tended to have lower child-dependency rates (in terms of young sons and daughters of the head) than did white families in the

South during all of the stages but the final one; this pattern of differences was found among all the residence groups with one noteworthy exception, namely, the higher child-dependency rate among nonwhite than white farm families with the head 45 to 64 years old. The findings relating to nonwhite farm families in the South are virtually identical with those for nonwhite farm families in the Nation as a whole, as well over 90 percent of all nonwhite farm people live in the South.

In table 48, the color and area classifications of child-dependency rates are carried a step further. The figures show that these rates were at a minimum, for each age of head, among families living in large cities inside standard metropolitan areas and were at a maximum among rural-farm families outside standard metropolitan areas. Between these extremes there was one consistent deviation from a pattern of a negative relationship between child-dependency rate and size of place: in the metropolitan areas beyond the limits of the large cities (where residential suburbs are likely to be located), the child-dependency rate was higher than that in urban areas outside metropolitan areas. These general observations are likewise true for nonwhite families.

TABLE 48.—PERCENT OF HUSBAND-WIFE PRIMARY FAMILIES WITH ONE OR MORE OWN CHILDREN UNDER 18 YEARS OLD, BY AGE OF HEAD AND COLOR, INSIDE AND OUTSIDE STANDARD METROPOLITAN AREAS OF 50,000 OR MORE: 1950

Area and color	All husband-wife primary families	Age of head (years)			
		Under 35	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
Total..........................	55.1	74.2	78.1	37.4	5.9
Inside standard metropolitan areas....	53.2	72.3	75.9	34.0	4.3
In cities of 100,000 or more........	50.0	69.0	73.0	31.8	3.9
All other..........................	56.6	75.4	78.9	36.4	4.7
Outside standard metropolitan areas...	57.5	76.8	81.1	42.3	7.4
Urban..............................	53.7	72.3	76.9	35.7	4.8
Rural nonfarm......................	58.3	78.1	81.2	41.1	6.9
Rural farm........................	61.1	82.1	86.0	49.8	10.6
Nonwhite..........................	51.3	69.7	61.4	37.7	13.3
Inside standard metropolitan areas....	47.1	66.2	54.8	31.0	9.2
In cities of 100,000 or more........	45.2	64.6	51.7	29.0	8.2
All other..........................	51.8	70.3	62.6	36.0	11.0
Outside standard metropolitan areas...	56.0	73.9	69.7	45.2	16.5
Urban..............................	46.9	67.1	57.0	34.2	10.3
Rural nonfarm......................	55.5	75.7	69.0	40.6	15.9
Rural farm........................	62.7	78.1	79.5	55.1	20.5

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, tables 49 and 50.

Ages of dependent children. Among families in the early years after marriage, all children of the parents are young, unless, of course, they are children by a former union. As the ages of the parents advance, so will the ages of their children. Among families formed later than average, and among large families, there are, of course, many parents who are approaching middle age who have quite young children of their own in the home. During this phase of family life, therefore, one

would expect to find a relatively wide dispersion of ages of the children. As old age approaches, the ages of the children advance more and more until virtually all of the children still at home are in their teens or older.

These elementary facts are documented by the figures presented in table 49. The figures may be interpreted as giving the probabilities that families with the head in a specified age range will have children of stated ages. Data on families with and without children under 3 and 3 to 5 years of age are useful as background materials in estimating the amount by which the labor force participation of women might be increased, for instance, in the event of a national emergency. Thus, it could be reasoned that only a small proportion of women with children under 3 years of age would enter the labor market, whereas a substantial proportion of those with no children under 3 but with some 3 to 5 years of age could be induced to place these children in the care of relatives or in day nurseries so that the mothers could work outside the home. Women with children of school age but with none of preschool age would be still more promising prospects for outside work.[3] The type of data shown in table 49 is in demand not only by labor force analysts but also by market research analysts, youth-serving organizations, and others.

TABLE 49.—HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES BY AGE OF HEAD, AND PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY PRESENCE OF OWN CHILDREN UNDER 3, 3 TO 5, AND 6 TO 17 YEARS OLD: APRIL 1953

[Numbers in thousands. Percent not shown where less than 0.1]

Presence of own children by age of child	All husband-wife families	Age of head (years)						
		Under 25	25 to 29	30 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
Total.........................	35,782	1,842	3,914	4,648	8,762	7,302	5,266	4,048
Percent......................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No own children under 18.........	44.1	37.8	21.4	17.2	20.2	48.5	81.4	95.3
1 or more under 18...............	55.9	62.2	78.6	82.8	79.8	51.5	18.6	4.7
Some under 3..................	20.9	54.3	56.4	41.6	21.5	5.5	0.6	0.6
None 3 to 17.................	7.4	39.2	26.4	10.8	3.3	1.0	0.1	0.2
Some 3 to 5; none 6 to 17....	5.6	13.6	19.9	12.6	3.9	0.5	...	0.1
Some 3 to 5; some 6 to 17....	4.4	1.3	6.5	10.6	7.3	1.9	0.2	0.1
None 3 to 5; some 6 to 17....	3.6	0.2	3.6	7.7	7.0	2.1	0.3	0.1
None under 3..................	35.0	7.9	22.2	41.2	58.3	45.9	17.9	4.2
Some 3 to 5; none 6 to 17....	4.4	6.4	12.2	9.8	4.9	1.3	0.2	...
Some 3 to 5; some 6 to 17....	7.2	0.8	5.2	15.1	14.2	5.1	0.9	...
None 3 to 5; some 6 to 17....	23.3	0.8	4.8	16.4	39.3	39.6	16.9	4.1

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports,* Series P–20, No. 53, table 6.

In order to reduce the detail in table 49 to a few of the most meaningful figures and thereby facilitate the analysis, table 50 was constructed. This table shows that in 1953 about 55 percent of the families with the head under 30 years old had children under 3 years of age living with them and that at older ages the proportion went down until for heads above 55 years old, it was virtually zero. The maximum proportion (about 45 percent) with children 3 to 5 years of age was found among families with the

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[3] In Chapter 5, data on the labor force participation rates of women with children of different ages will be discussed.

head 25 to 34 years old. The peak proportion with preschool-age children occurred among families with heads in their late 20's and the peak proportion with children of school age occurred among families with the head 35 to 44. The wide variation in the proportion of families with children during the several phases of family development emphasizes the usefulness of studying family composition in terms of the life cycle approach.

TABLE 50.—PERCENT OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES WITH ONE OR MORE OWN CHILDREN OF SELECTED AGES, BY AGE OF HEAD: APRIL 1953

Ages of own children	All husband-wife families	Age of head (years)						
		Under 25	25 to 29	30 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
Under 6 years.............	32.5	61.5	73.8	66.5	40.6	11.9	1.7	0.6
6 to 17 years.............	38.5	3.1	20.1	48.8	67.8	48.7	18.3	4.3
Under 18 years............	55.9	62.2	78.6	82.8	79.8	51.5	18.6	4.7
Under 3 years.............	20.9	54.3	56.4	41.6	21.5	5.5	0.6	0.6
3 to 5 years.............	21.6	22.1	43.8	48.1	30.3	8.8	1.3	0.2
3 to 17 years.............	48.5	23.0	52.2	72.0	76.5	50.4	18.4	4.6

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 53, table 6.

Number of adults in the home

The proportion of families in 1953 with adult members other than the head and wife living in the home (about one-fourth) was much smaller and less variable from one stage of family development to another than the proportion with young members of dependent age (about three-fifths for all families). Throughout the life of the family, there was no time when the probability of having two or more of these adult members in the home exceeded that of having only one, whereas the probability of having two or more members under 18 in the home exceeded that of having only one from the time the head was about 25 until he was about 55. Families with young dependents tended to be concentrated in the earlier stages and those with adult members besides the head and wife tended to be concentrated in the later stages of the cycle (tables 44 and 51 and figure 14).

TABLE 51.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES BY NUMBER OF MEMBERS 18 YEARS OLD AND OVER OTHER THAN HEAD AND WIFE, BY AGE OF HEAD: APRIL 1953

Number of family members 18 years old and over other than head and wife	All husband-wife families	Age of head (years)					
		Under 25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
Total......................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
No other members 18 and over.....	75.5	96.2	88.7	79.0	62.3	63.0	70.8
1 other member 18 and over.......	18.1	2.7	9.0	17.0	28.2	25.8	19.0
2 other members 18 and over......	4.9	1.0	2.0	3.3	7.4	7.8	7.2
3 or more other members..........	1.5	0.1	0.4	0.7	2.1	3.3	3.1

Source: Unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data.

FIGURE 14.—PERCENT OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES WITH 1 OR MORE MEMBERS UNDER 18,
AND WITH 1 OR MORE 18 AND OVER OTHER THAN HEAD OR WIFE: 1953
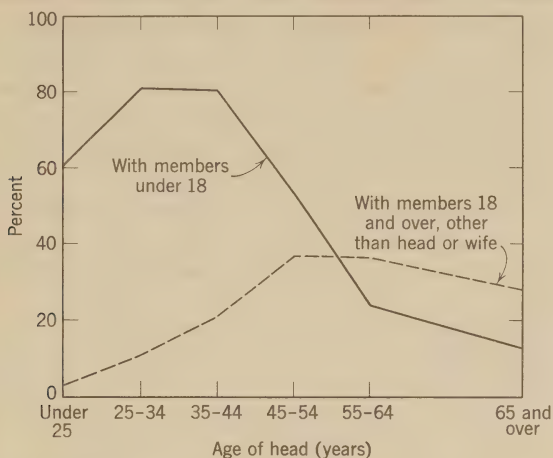
Note: Based on data in tables 44 and 51.

The predominant relationships of the adult members to the family head
very likely changed considerably from stage to stage, although there were
no census data available at the time of this writing to bear out this impres-
sion explicitly.[4]   Perhaps the small number of adults other than the head
or wife in families with the head under 30 years of age were mostly
widowed mothers and single brothers or sisters of the head or his wife.
As the age of the head advanced toward 45 years, more and more of the
adults were unmarried sons and daughters who had passed their 18th year
but had not yet left home.   Families were most likely to have adult rel-
atives living with them while the head was between 45 and 65 years old.
During this period about three out of every eight families had one or more
adults other than the head and wife living with them.   Perhaps most of
these adults fell into the following types: unmarried sons and daughters
over 18, young couples who had not yet set up housekeeping on their own,
aging parents, and separated, widowed, or divorced persons who were
living temporarily with relatives until they reorganized their family affairs.
About one-fourth of the families with the head over 65 years of age had
adult relatives among their members.   The family heads in this final
phase were likely to be receiving financial and other types of assistance
from the adult relatives living with them; the reverse was probably true,
as a rule, for families with younger heads.

Families with two or more adult members other than the head or his

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[4] Data on the age distribution of family members by age of the family head and wife would throw
light on this subject.   Such data, based on the April 1955 Current Population Survey, were compiled
after this writing and were published in *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 67.

wife represented only 6 or 7 percent of all families in 1953, but such families were about 10 or 11 percent of all families with the head 45 years old and over. This fact is evidence that families with the head in the middle years or older were the ones most likely to have a husband-wife subfamily among their members. The figures in table 52, based on about 2 million married couples without their own households in 1946, show that doubled couples with the husband under 45 generally shared the living quarters of household heads 45 years old and over; about 70 percent of all doubled couples met this description. Of the small group of doubled couples with the head 45 years old or over, about two-thirds lived in households in which the head was between 25 and 64 years old.

TABLE **52.**—PERCENT OF MARRIED COUPLES WITHOUT OWN HOUSEHOLD, BY AGE OF HUSBAND AND AGE OF HEAD OF HOUSEHOLD: FEBRUARY 1946

Age of head of household	All married couples without own household	Age of husband (years)			
		Under 25	25 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
Total.................	100.0	22.0	60.0	12.3	5.7
Under 25 years...........	1.3	0.2	0.4	0.5	0.2
25 to 44 years..............	17.5	4.4	6.4	3.9	2.9
45 to 64 years..............	62.9	16.0	41.0	3.8	2.0
65 years and over...........	18.4	1.5	12.2	4.1	0.6

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Population*, Series P–S, No. 15, table 4.

In the several stages of the life cycle, families with young members who were not sons or daughters of the family head were the most likely to include adult members other than the head or wife (table 53). This tendency is especially noticeable in families with the head 45 years old and over, among which, it has just been observed, most of the subfamilies were concentrated.

TABLE **53.**—PERCENT OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES WITH ONE OR MORE MEMBERS 18 YEARS OLD AND OVER OTHER THAN HEAD AND WIFE, BY AGE OF HEAD AND PRESENCE OF MEMBERS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD: APRIL 1953

[Percent not shown where base is less than 200,000]

Presence of members under 18 years old	All husband-wife families	Age of head (years)					
		Under 25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
Total..................	24.5	3.8	11.3	21.0	37.7	37.0	29.2
No members under 18...........	24.5	0.9	7.0	15.6	34.3	31.6	23.9
1 or more members under 18....	24.5	5.5	12.3	22.2	40.5	54.3	67.6
All own children.............	21.1	3.7	11.7	20.9	37.3	45.5	...
Not all own children........	68.1	...	...	56.9	72.0	76.7	78.5

Source: Unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data.

It is also noteworthy that even among families in the middle stages with no members under 18 except their own children, a sizable minority had one or more adults other than the head and wife in the home (table 53). Perhaps most of these adults were unmarried sons and daughters just a

few years older than those under 18; some, of course, were older sons and daughters who had married and either never left home or returned after their marriages had been broken; some were married daughters whose husbands were in the Armed Forces; still others may have represented a variety of relationships to the family head, such as parents, uncles, sisters, and cousins.   Table 53 would be much more meaningful, of course, if it had separate data for unmarried sons and daughters, married sons and daughters, and other types of adult relatives.   This is one of the gaps in the available data that could be filled by future research.

Size of family

Thus far, the number of young members and the number of adult members in the family besides the head and wife have been discussed in relation to the life cycle of the family.   In the present section, these components will be treated in combination with the head and wife, so as to account for the full family membership.   The term "size of family," is used here (as elsewhere in this monograph) to refer to this entire group of persons—the family head and all other persons in the home who are related to the head by blood, marriage, or adoption.   The discussion is limited, however, to husband-wife families.

The family generally passes through an early stage, when the husband and wife are the only members, to a developmental stage when the family is expanding, a maturing stage when the family is contracting, and a later period when the couple is living alone once more.   A small minority of the families do not progress beyond the initial stage when the composition is limited to the husband and wife.   Thus, in 1953, about one-sixth of the families during the period of family building comprised the married couple and no one else (table 54).   This proportion may be somewhat too high to be interpreted as an indication of lifetime childlessness because some of these families may have children at a still later date or may have had children who had left home or died.   On the other hand, it may be somewhat too low because some of the families among the remaining five-sixths (with members other than the head and wife) included no children of their own. On balance, one-sixth is probably quite close to the true proportion of lifetime childless families in 1953.[5]

According to data for 1953, when the head is in his 30's and early 40's, the family is most likely to comprise four persons, although the dispersion of family size during this period is the greatest.   Among younger and older family heads, the most frequent size of family is two persons, but the proportion with three members is almost as large among the younger heads and remains significant up to old age.   Rarely are there as many

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[5] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports,* Series P–20, No. 46, table 1, shows that in 1952, about 18 percent of all married women aged 35 to 44 years with husband present had never borne a living child.   By the time these women pass through the childbearing period, close to one-sixth of them will have never had a child.   By the time married women 30 to 34 years old in 1952 complete the childbearing period, the proportion childless may have dropped to about one-tenth.

as six persons in families with the head under 25 or over 55 years old. The most likely time for a family to have six members or more is when the head is 35 to 44 years old; about 18 percent of the families in this stage in 1953 had six or more in the family as compared with about 22 percent in 1940.[6]

TABLE 54.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES BY SIZE OF FAMILY AND AGE OF HEAD: APRIL 1953

Size of family	All husband-wife families	Age of head (years)					
		Under 25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
Total....................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
2 persons.....................	31.2	36.9	17.3	15.8	30.0	52.0	66.8
3 persons.....................	24.3	35.4	26.3	21.0	26.7	24.3	17.8
4 persons.....................	21.4	18.5	29.6	27.6	20.0	11.9	6.6
5 persons.....................	12.1	5.9	16.0	17.9	11.3	5.4	4.3
6 persons or more.............	11.0	3.4	10.7	17.7	12.1	6.4	4.4
Median size of family[1]........	3.27	2.87	3.72	3.98	3.25	2.46	2.25
Mean size of family...........	3.60	3.07	3.89	4.21	3.63	2.97	2.67

[1] Figures for 1940 on the median size of primary family, shown in *1940 Census of Population, Types of Families,* table II, are as follows: All husband-wife primary families, 3.47; head under 25, 2.69; 25 to 29, 3.08; 30 to 34, 3.51; 35 to 44, 3.98; 45 to 54, 3.92; 55 to 64, 3.22; 65 and over, 2.50.   Primary families constituted 98 percent of all families in 1940 and 99 percent of all families in 1953.

Source: Unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data. .

During the period when families are generally largest (when the head is 35 to 44 years old), the average family has about one more person than the average family with the head under 25 years old and between one and two more persons than the average family with the head 55 years old and over; this generalization may be made on the basis of either the median or (arithmetic) mean size of family.   Between 1940 and 1953, there were significant increases in the median size of families with the head under 35 years old and significant decreases for families with the head 45 years old and over, with a net over-all decrease for the 13-year period.[7]

[6] *1940 Census of Population, Types of Families,* table 3.

[7] In computing the median size of family, round numbers are used as the midpoints, rather than the limits, of the class intervals.   Thus, the interval containing three-person families is assumed to have the midpoint 3.00 and the limits 2.50 and 3.49.   This practice is consistent with the use of 3.00 as the number of persons in a three-person family when computing the mean size of family.

A comparison of the median and mean size of family for successive age groups of the family head in table 54 brings out the fact that the amount by which the mean exceeded the median was not as great among families with the head under 45 years old as it was among families with the head 45 years old and over.   The explanation lies in the greater degree of positive skewness of the size distribution among the families with older heads.   Thus, at all ages, the half with the smaller families covered a relatively small range of family sizes, whereas the half with the larger families covered a relatively large range; but among families with older heads, this phenomenon occurred in a more pronounced degree.   For heads between 25 and 44 years old, the distributions by size of family were the most nearly symmetrical.   In general, one would expect to find essentially the same pattern of differences in the average size of family among the several age groups regardless of which measure—arithmetic mean or median—was used.   Largely because of the greater flexibility of means, they are used more extensively in the present study.   In most instances, it is necessary to estimate the midpoint of the uppermost interval in computing means, but the error in estimating this midpoint is generally small.

Two sets of averages are presented in table 55. The second differs from the first in that it excludes the head and wife from the number of family members. By excluding these constant components, the smaller figures bring into sharper relief the variable aspect of family size. Both sets of figures point up the consistently small size of family (about 2.0 to 2.4 persons) where no young members were present, the considerably larger family size (about 3.6 to 4.6 persons) where own children under 18 years old of the family head were present, and the still larger family size (about 5.2 to 5.5 persons) where some of the young members were relatives other than sons and daughters of the head. The absence of figures in certain cells of the table (because of the relatively large sampling variability for small numbers) provides evidence, noted elsewhere, that own children under 18 tend to be concentrated in families with younger heads and other young members in families with older heads.

TABLE 55.—AVERAGE (MEAN) SIZE OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES, AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEMBERS OTHER THAN HEAD AND WIFE, BY AGE OF HEAD AND PRESENCE OF MEMBERS UNDER 18 YEARS OLD: APRIL 1953

[Average not shown where base is less than 200,000]

Presence of members under 18 years old	All husband-wife families	Age of head (years)					
		Under 25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
AVERAGE SIZE OF FAMILY							
Total.........................	3.60	3.07	3.89	4.21	3.63	2.97	2.67
No members under 18.................	2.33	2.01	2.10	2.20	2.44	2.43	2.35
1 or more members under 18..........	4.49	3.70	4.30	4.67	4.62	4.62	5.00
All own children.................	4.43	3.62	4.28	4.64	4.54	4.46	...
Not all own children.............	5.34	...	...	5.48	5.39	5.24	5.30
AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEMBERS OTHER THAN HUSBAND AND WIFE[1]							
Total.........................	1.60	1.07	1.89	2.21	1.63	0.97	0.67
No members under 18.................	0.33	0.01	0.10	0.20	0.44	0.43	0.35
1 or more members under 18..........	2.49	1.70	2.30	2.67	2.62	2.62	3.00
All own children.................	2.43	1.62	2.28	2.64	2.54	2.46	...
Not all own children.............	3.34	...	...	3.48	3.39	3.24	3.30

[1] Same as average size of family minus 2.00 (head and wife).

Source: Unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data.

Changes in the age composition of family members during successive stages of the family life cycle are summarized in table 56 and figure 15. The graphic presentation shows effectively the predominance of young sons and daughters of the head among the family members other than the head and wife in families with the head under 55 years old. It also shows the small but steadily increasing proportion of adult family members throughout the course of the average family's existence. Moreover, it shows that, as the proportion of these adult members increases, the proportion of young members other than sons and daughters likewise increases but never becomes a large factor in determining the average size of family.

TABLE **56.**—AVERAGE (MEAN) SIZE OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES, AVERAGE NUMBER OF CHILDREN PER FAMILY BY AGE, AND AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEMBERS 18 YEARS OLD AND OVER OTHER THAN HEAD AND WIFE PER FAMILY, BY AGE OF HEAD: APRIL 1953

[Average not shown where base is less than 200,000]

Average (mean)	All husband-wife families	Age of head (years)					
		Under 25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
Size of family:							
All families......................	3.60	3.07	3.89	4.21	3.63	2.97	2.67
Families of 3 or more persons...	4.32	3.70	4.28	4.62	4.32	4.02	4.01
Number of members under 18:							
All families......................	1.28	1.04	1.77	1.99	1.13	0.42	0.21
Families with members under 18..	2.18	1.66	2.17	2.45	2.08	1.75	1.72
Number of own children under 18:							
All families......................	1.22	1.00	1.74	1.94	1.06	0.32	0.08
Families with own children......	2.18	1.61	2.15	2.43	2.06	1.74	...
Number of own children under 6:							
All families......................	0.51	0.81	1.15	0.63	0.18	0.02	0.01
Families with own children......	1.57	1.32	1.65	1.56	1.47	...	...
Number of members 18 years old and over other than head and wife:							
All families......................	0.32	0.03	0.12	0.22	0.50	0.55	0.46
Families with other members.....	1.34	...	1.24	1.23	1.32	1.41	1.48

Source: Unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data.

The initial group of averages in table 56 shows the average number of persons of all ages per family (1) for all families and (2) for that approximately 70 percent of the families with members other than the head and wife. Differences between the two rows of figures are greatest in the early and late stages when the smallest proportions of families contain young children. In the balance of table 56, average numbers of family members of various ages per family are presented in two forms: first, with all families in the base and, second, with the base limited to those families which contain members of the specified ages. The data provide a basis for comparing the relative numerical importance of the different age groups of family members from one stage of the family cycle to another.

The second group of figures shows the average number of members under 18 years old per family (1) for all families (including those with no such members) and (2) for families containing one or more such members. Differences between the two sets of figures for comparable age groups are very great among families with the head over 45 years of age. The differences are even greater in the third group of figures, which is in terms of own children under 18. The large contrasts are a result of the fact that only a small proportion of the families with older heads had any young members, especially own children, in the home and this small proportion has relatively little weight when all families are considered. The fourth group shows that only one group of families, those with the head between 25 and 34 years old, had an average of one child under 6 years of age per family and that even among those with children, no age group averaged two per family.

The final group of averages in table 56 calls attention to the extremely small number of adult members other than the head and wife per family.

FIGURE 15.—AVERAGE NUMBER OF MEMBERS PER HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILY,
BY AGE OF HUSBAND: 1953
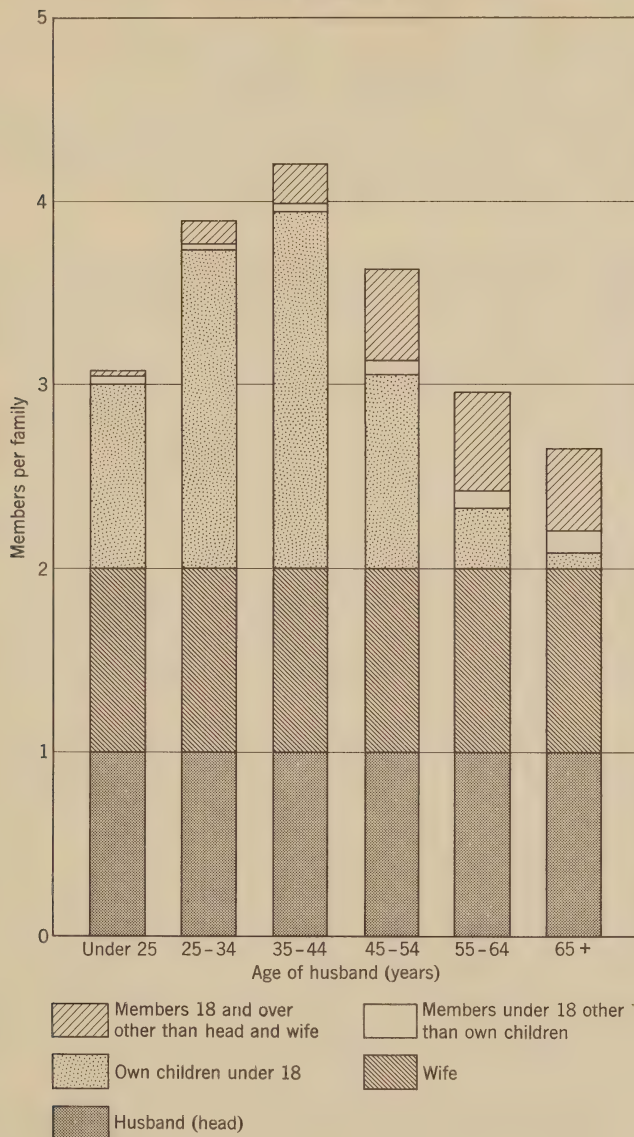
Note: Based on data in table 56.

Among older family heads, in whose families these adults are more often
found, the average was barely one in every other family. Among families
with one or more of these adult members present, the average number of
such adults per family was uniformly small and exhibited little variation
from one age group of head to another.

CHAPTER 5

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC CHANGES DURING THE FAMILY LIFE CYCLE

As families proceed through the life cycle, significant changes generally occur not only in family composition but also in the social and economic status of the family. The latter type of change will be the main focus of attention in this chapter. It should come as no surprise that the data show an improvement in economic status until the head is in middle age and then a gradual decline. One of the purposes here is to present evidence in support of this general principle, but evidence of deviations from it will also be pointed out, and related observations will be made.

Some of the variables, notably income, may be analyzed readily in terms of upward and downward social mobility during the family cycle. Employment of the wife and various housing characteristics can also be profitably studied within the same framework. Major occupation group presents some problems of interpretation because each occupation group embraces a fairly wide range of economic levels which persons may ascend or descend. Still other variables, such as education, usually remain constant after marriage and hence variations with age have a unique meaning. Each variable discussed in this chapter, therefore, should be considered on its own merits, with the recognition that some throw much more light on family changes during the life cycle than do others.

Education and residential mobility of the head

Education of the head. Differences between the distributions of family heads by educational level within broad age groups, shown in table 57, reveal trends during the last several decades in the amount of schooling received, rather than changes in educational level during the family life cycle; most persons do not advance their educational grade level after marriage. The improvement, as measured by the median years of school completed, has been great indeed, amounting to the addition of a high school education to family heads under 35 years of age, as compared with those 45 years old and over. There is evidence that the rate of progress in educational attainment of young family heads has been accelerated in recent decades but how much further improvement will develop is conjectural. As the educational level of family heads goes up, the occupational skills and potential earnings of the family heads advance. These changes

are probably associated with rising standards of living at all stages of the family cycle.

TABLE 57.—HUSBAND-WIFE PRIMARY FAMILIES BY YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY HEAD AND AGE OF HEAD: 1950 AND 1940

Census year and years of school completed	All husband-wife primary families		Age of head (years)			
	Number	Percent	Under 35	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
1950						
Total......................	32,537,000	...	9,473,000	8,196,000	11,541,000	3,327,000
Percent..................	...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Elementary: 0 to 4 years.........	3,356,000	10.3	4.7	7.1	13.5	23.0
5 to 8 years.........	11,877,000	36.5	23.5	33.9	45.5	48.7
High school: 1 to 3 years.........	5,805,000	17.8	23.2	20.2	14.4	8.9
4 years..............	6,189,000	19.0	29.2	20.7	12.5	8.6
College: 1 to 3 years.........	2,360,000	7.3	9.8	7.8	5.7	4.0
4 years or more......	2,383,000	7.3	8.1	8.6	6.5	4.8
School years not reported.........	567,000	1.7	1.5	1.5	1.9	2.1
Median school years completed.....	9.4	...	11.7	10.2	8.1	7.1
1940						
Total......................	26,606,000	...	7,324,000	6,830,000	9,958,000	2,493,000
Percent..................	...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Elementary: 0 to 4 years.........	3,740,000	14.1	7.7	11.0	18.3	24.2
5 to 8 years.........	12,527,000	47.1	37.3	47.7	52.0	54.6
High school: 1 to 3 years.........	4,024,000	15.1	22.8	16.7	10.6	6.4
4 years..............	3,266,000	12.3	19.2	12.0	8.9	6.3
College: 1 to 3 years.........	1,338,000	5.0	6.3	5.5	4.2	3.3
4 years or more......	1,434,000	5.4	6.0	6.3	4.7	3.8
School years not reported.........	277,000	1.0	0.7	1.0	1.3	1.4
Median school years completed.....	8.0	...	9.6	8.2	7.4	6.8

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, table 2.

Residential mobility.   The proportion of families that move within a given year is relatively high among those with a young head and declines as the age of the head advances (table 58).[1]   Among families with the head under 35 years old in 1950, the mobility rate (33 percent) was twice as high as that for heads 35 to 44 years old (16 percent) and more than five times as high as that (6 percent) for heads 65 years old and over. It is, thus, the younger couples who account for most of the changes in living quarters.   In fact, of all the families that changed residence between 1949 and 1950, two out of every three were families with the head under 35.   Families in this early stage of development included many who moved during the year because of marriage; others who moved to satisfy

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[1] The statistics given here are for movement of the family head; however, about nine-tenths of the family heads who move do so with their family as a whole, according to data from the 1955 Current Population Survey which were tabulated after this manuscript was prepared.   See U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 67.   Data on mobility in terms of movement during the preceding year, as shown in table 58, were first collected by the Bureau of the Census in the late 1940's; available figures do not show very great changes in mobility from year to year. Data for 1952 on the length of time since last move were presented by marital status, age, and sex in Series P–20, No. 47, table 7, and by relationship to head of household and age in table 8 of the same report.   Data for 1950 on mobility of heads of families by type and number of own children under 18 years old were shown in Series P–20, No. 36, table 5.

the housing and schooling needs of an expanding family; and still others who moved so that the husband could accept a more promising job in another locality. During the early years of work experience, the husband, as a rule, has not established enough seniority rights and other advantages in his current job to keep him from leaving it and taking a different job far enough away to require a change of residence. Job shifts are only one of many factors associated with mobility, of course. At all ages, movement to rural-nonfarm areas (often suburban areas) is the greatest.

TABLE **58.**—HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES BY RESIDENCE OF HEAD IN 1949 AND AGE OF HEAD, URBAN AND RURAL: 1950

Residence in 1949 and urban-rural residence in 1950	All husband-wife families		Age of head (years)			
	Number	Percent	Under 35	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
Total.........................	32,971,000	...	9,669,000	8,287,000	11,656,000	3,359,000
Percent....................	...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Same house as in 1950.............	26,861,000	81.5	65.9	83.4	89.7	93.0
Different house...................	5,780,000	17.6	32.8	15.8	9.3	6.2
Same county.....................	3,983,000	12.1	22.5	10.8	6.5	4.5
Different county or abroad......	1,797,000	5.5	10.3	5.0	2.8	1.7
Residence not reported............	329,000	1.0	1.3	0.9	0.9	0.9
PERCENT SAME HOUSE AS IN 1950, BY URBAN-RURAL RESIDENCE						
Urban in 1950.....................	...	81.3	65.2	83.5	90.1	93.1
Rural nonfarm in 1950.............	...	78.5	64.2	80.7	87.2	91.2
Rural farm in 1950................	...	86.3	73.4	86.3	91.0	94.8

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, table 15.

Younger couples are not only more likely to move, but also more likely to shift their residences across county lines. Couples in or near middle age (and their children) usually have established social and other attachments which probably tend to discourage residential movement, at least for long distances. Those in old age probably are affected by similar motives but with greater intensity. Advancing age is attended by increasing difficulty in making adjustments, by a greater need for the sense of security that comes from being in familiar surroundings, and by a host of other psychological and economic hindrances to mobility.

Economic characteristics

Labor force participation of the wife. One of the most significant factors in the improvement of the economic well-being of families during the 1940's and early 1950's was the rapid increase in the employment of women outside the home. The earnings of working wives constituted an important addition to family incomes. In 1940, one out of every eight wives of family heads was in the labor force but by 1950 this ratio had increased to one out of every five, and it continued to rise between 1950 and 1955. According to data for the early 1950's, among women in their

first year of marriage, about 40 percent were labor force participants; among those married a year or two longer, the labor force participation rate dropped to about 30 percent.[2]   According to 1950 data, the labor force participation rate reached a low point of about 20 percent during the time when wives were most likely to have small children at home, then rose to one-fourth for married women about 40 years old.   Among married women in successively older ages above 40, the labor force participation rate gradually declined (table 59 and figure 16).[3]

TABLE 59.—HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES BY LABOR FORCE STATUS OF WIFE, AGE OF WIFE, PRESENCE OF OWN CHILDREN UNDER 6 YEARS OLD, AND COLOR: 1950

Labor force status of wife, presence of own children under 6 years old, and color	All husband-wife families	Age of wife (years)				
		Under 25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
Total.........................	33,486,000	3,759,000	9,146,000	8,305,000	10,187,000	2,090,000
Wife in labor force.........	6,853,000	883,000	1,927,000	2,093,000	1,857,000	93,000
Wife not in labor force.....	26,633,000	2,876,000	7,219,000	6,212,000	8,330,000	1,997,000
No own children under 6.........	22,463,000	1,439,000	3,301,000	5,741,000	9,893,000	2,090,000
Wife in labor force.........	5,689,000	654,000	1,312,000	1,807,000	1,822,000	93,000
Wife not in labor force.....	16,774,000	785,000	1,989,000	3,934,000	8,071,000	1,997,000
1 or more own children under 6..	11,023,000	2,320,000	5,845,000	2,563,000	294,000	...
Wife in labor force.........	1,164,000	229,000	615,000	286,000	34,000	...
Wife not in labor force.....	9,859,000	2,091,000	5,230,000	2,277,000	260,000	...
PERCENT WITH WIFE IN LABOR FORCE						
Total.....................	20.5	23.5	21.1	25.2	18.2	4.5
No own children under 6.........	25.3	45.5	39.8	31.5	18.4	4.5
1 or more own children under 6..	10.6	9.9	10.5	11.2	11.7	...
Nonwhite..................	30.2	21.7	32.9	37.5	27.4	9.5
No own children under 6.........	36.1	36.5	46.3	43.6	27.9	9.5
1 or more own children under 6..	17.3	12.8	18.2	20.6	20.0	...

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, tables 12 and 13.

Among wives with no children of preschool age, the proportion in the labor force in 1950 gradually declined from about 45 percent at the youngest ages to about 30 percent by middle age; then, it fell more rapidly and went below 5 percent by about the age of 65.   By contrast, only about one woman in ten with preschool-age children worked outside the home; this ratio varied little among mothers of different ages.   Of the working mothers with quite young children of their own in the home, the great majority must either have another member of the household who can care for the children in the mother's absence, or they must take their children to another home or to a nursery for care during the working hours.

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[2] National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, table 28. Based on Current Population Survey data.

[3] More detailed data on this subject for 1950 are shown in *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 1, Chapter A, Employment and Personal Characteristics, table 6; and Part 5, Chapter C, Fertility, tables 24 to 27 and 46 and 47.   Similar data for 1940 are shown in *1940 Census of Population, Employment and Personal Characteristics*, table 3; and *Employment and Family Characteristics of Women*, various tables.   See issues of U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–50, for current data on this subject.

FIGURE 16.—PERCENT OF WIVES IN LABOR FORCE, BY AGE, COLOR, AND PRESENCE OF
OWN CHILDREN UNDER 6: 1953
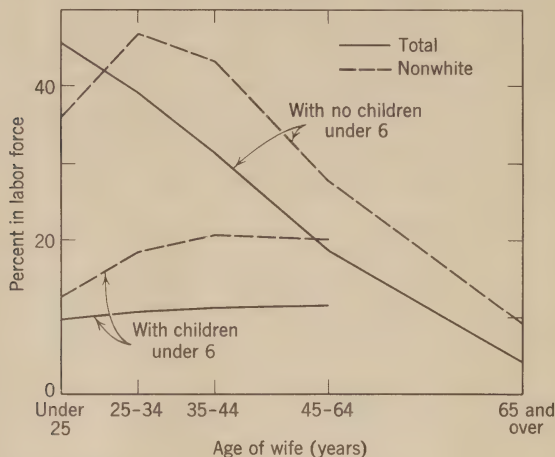
Note: Based on data in table 59.

Labor force participation rates of nonwhite women in all phases of family development except the earliest were higher than those for white women (tables 59 and 60). The over-all rate was half again as high for the nonwhite married women (30 percent) as for all married women (21 percent); but among the youngest women with no children under 6 years of age, the rate was somewhat lower for nonwhite than white women. At each age level, the relative difference between the labor force participation rates of mothers of small children and other wives was smaller for non-white women than for white women. These facts seem to imply that more of the nonwhite mothers are favorably situated for leaving their children with relatives or others; or it may be that for a larger proportion of non-white mothers, the pressures to work outweigh the pressures to devote full time to their children.

Women who are city-dwellers have many more opportunities, of course, to obtain work for pay outside the home than do rural women. In all but the oldest age group of wives, the proportion in the labor force was much higher among those living in urban areas than it was among those on farms; corresponding figures for rural-nonfarm wives were intermediate, but closer to those for farm women at the younger ages and closer to urban women at the older ages. The proportion of farm wives of all ages in the labor force in 1950 (12 percent) was about half as high as that for urban wives (23 percent) and two-thirds as high as that for rural-nonfarm wives (18 percent).

The age at which employment of wives reached a peak in 1950 varied from one section of the country to another. In the Northeast, the peak occurred among wives under 25 years of age. Age at marriage in this

section of the country is relatively high and a smaller proportion of women
under the age of 25 are likely to have young children. In the South, espe-
cially among nonwhite wives, and in the West, the peak occurred at ages
35 to 44 years, when all of the children were likely to be old enough to
be left alone or when older children could look after the younger ones.
Among the groups with peak rates of labor force participation at ages 35
to 44 years, relatively high rates were also found among women at still
older ages.

TABLE 60.—PERCENT OF HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES WITH WIFE IN THE LABOR FORCE BY AGE
OF WIFE, BY COLOR, RESIDENCE, AND REGION: 1950

Area and color	All husband-wife families	Age of wife (years)				
		Under 25	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
Total..................	20.5	23.5	21.1	25.2	18.2	4.5
COLOR						
White....................	19.6	23.7	19.9	24.0	17.6	4.1
Nonwhite.................	30.2	21.7	32.9	37.5	27.4	9.5
RESIDENCE						
Urban....................	23.0	28.6	23.6	27.6	20.1	4.7
Rural nonfarm............	18.3	17.1	17.9	24.4	17.7	4.1
Rural farm..............	12.4	10.7	13.1	15.7	11.7	4.1
REGIONS						
Northeast...............	19.8	27.1	20.1	23.7	17.8	4.3
North Central...........	19.8	24.6	20.3	24.3	17.7	4.3
South...................	21.0	21.2	22.2	26.3	17.8	4.5
White.................	19.1	21.2	20.2	23.8	15.8	3.8
Nonwhite..............	29.8	21.6	32.2	37.4	27.8	9.0
West....................	22.2	22.5	21.9	27.8	21.1	5.1

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics
of Families, tables 12 and 13.

It seems reasonable to expect that, as it becomes increasingly common
for women to obtain work experience before childbearing and thereby to
develop specialized skills, more women will return to the labor force after
their children have grown old enough to stay by themselves or to be cared
for by others. Women in middle age generally have fewer home duties
to disturb their employment routine and often are motivated to work in
order to improve their family's level of living or to help pay for their chil-
dren's schooling. Those who work outside the home in later life are likely
to be impelled by the desire to help their married children and to lay aside
savings for use in old age. Among wives of all ages, there are many, of
course, who like the active life of the office, school room, or factory and
who choose, therefore, to keep employed, without being primarily concerned
about the amount of earnings they receive from working. Others refrain
from employment because they prefer being engaged in their own home
care or in civic or social activities.

Current employment conditions, it should be remembered, affect the
labor force participation of wives regardless of age, presence of children,

color, and residence.   Accordingly, the proportions given above may be expected to shift to higher or lower levels as employment conditions are better or worse than they were in 1950.

   Employment status and class of worker of the head.   By the age of 18, which is five years before the median age at marriage for men, close to one-half of the men have joined the labor force.[1]   Not until about the age of 70 does the proportion of men in the labor force (without regard to family status) drop back to one-half.

   About 90 to 95 percent of all family heads under 65 years of age were employed civilians in 1950 (table 61).   Substantial proportions of those under 35 who were not employed civilians were attending school, serving in the Armed Forces, or unemployed.   Probably most of those in the middle years who were not employed were either unemployed or unable to work because of physical or other disability.   Less than half of the family heads 65 years old and over were employed.   Above the age of 65, increasing numbers of heads had retired from the labor force because of inability to work or for other reasons, including the belief that no suitable work was available.   The unemployment rate, as recorded in the 1950 Census, rose relatively little with advancing age among older workers.

TABLE **61.**—HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES BY EMPLOYMENT STATUS, CLASS OF WORKER, AND AGE OF HEAD, URBAN AND RURAL: 1950

Area and employment status and class of worker of head	All husband-wife families		Age of head (years)			
	Number	Percent	Under 35	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
Total..........................	32,971,000	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Employed civilians...................	28,573,000	86.7	90.6	94.0	89.1	48.5
Private wage and salary workers...	18,882,000	57.3	67.4	63.0	54.6	23.3
Government workers................	2,618,000	7.9	8.2	8.4	8.5	4.1
Self-employed workers[1]...........	7,072,000	21.5	15.0	22.6	26.0	21.1
Other heads.......................	4,398,000	13.3	9.4	6.0	10.9	51.5
PERCENT SELF-EMPLOYED WORKERS,[1] BY URBAN-RURAL RESIDENCE						
Urban..............................	...	12.5	7.3	14.1	16.0	11.0
Rural nonfarm......................	...	15.9	11.2	17.6	20.3	13.7
Rural farm.........................	...	68.9	67.3	68.9	71.8	62.5

[1] Includes the small number of heads who were unpaid family workers.

   Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, table 18.

   Wage and salary workers in 1950 exceeded all other types of workers combined by a ratio of three to one among husbands under 35 years of age, but the proportion of workers who were self-employed increased with age.   By the age of 45 to 64 years, the ratio dropped to three wage and

salary workers to two other workers and among still older workers, it fell below the point of one to one. During the middle years, the shift probably reflects largely a change in type of work but during the later years it probably reflects to a great extent a differential rate of retirement from the labor force. Up to late middle age the proportion of husbands who are self-employed increases and thereafter it decreases. This pattern is more pronounced among those in nonfarm areas than among those on farms. In all stages of family development, the proportion self-employed is several times as great among the heads of farm families, as one might expect.

Major occupation group of the head. Farm workers in 1950 represented an increasing proportion of workers as age advanced, perhaps in part because the predominant direction of migration has been from farms to nonfarm areas and older persons have been less likely than younger persons to make this change (table 62). The figures given here should not, therefore, be interpreted as evidence that families tend to move from nonfarm areas to farms in the middle or later phases of the life cycle.

TABLE **62.**—HUSBAND-WIFE PRIMARY FAMILIES BY AGE AND MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUP OF HEAD: 1950 AND 1940

Census year and major occupation group	All husband-wife primary families		Age of head (years)			
	Number	Per-cent	Under 35	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
1950						
Total.........................	32,537,000	...	9,473,000	8,196,000	11,541,000	3,327,000
Employed.....................	28,241,000	...	8,611,000	7,718,000	10,295,000	1,617,000
Percent...................	...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Profess'l, techn'l, and kindred wkrs..	2,216,000	7.8	8.6	8.6	7.0	6.3
Farmers and farm managers.............	3,425,000	12.1	8.9	10.6	13.8	25.6
Mgrs., off'ls, and propr's,exc. farm..	3,562,000	12.6	8.3	13.7	15.3	13.0
Clerical, sales, and kindred workers..	3,424,000	12.1	13.9	11.6	11.3	10.3
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred wkrs..	5,844,000	20.7	20.5	21.5	21.2	15.1
Operatives and kindred workers........	5,598,000	19.8	25.2	20.8	16.2	9.8
Service workers, incl. private hshld..	1,439,000	5.1	3.7	4.4	6.2	9.1
Farm laborers and foremen.............	609,000	2.2	2.7	1.9	1.8	2.9
Laborers, except farm and mine........	1,905,000	6.7	7.3	6.3	6.6	6.8
Occupation not reported...............	219,000	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.8	1.3
Other..................................	4,296,000	...	...	...	...	...
1940						
Total.........................	26,606,000	...	7,324,000	6,830,000	9,958,000	2,493,000
Employed.....................	21,817,000	...	6,442,000	6,035,000	8,158,000	1,183,000
Percent...................	...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Profess'l, techn'l, and kindred wkrs..	1,294,000	5.9	6.1	6.4	5.4	5.9
Farmers and farm managers.............	4,028,000	18.5	13.5	15.0	22.1	38.6
Mgrs., off'ls, and propr's,exc. farm..	2,658,000	12.2	8.0	13.1	14.6	14.0
Clerical, sales, and kindred workers..	2,551,000	11.7	13.3	12.6	10.4	7.6
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred wkrs..	3,658,000	16.8	14.5	18.2	18.3	11.7
Operatives and kindred workers........	3,913,000	17.9	24.7	18.9	13.5	6.7
Service workers, incl. private hshld..	1,201,000	5.5	4.6	5.5	6.0	7.0
Farm laborers and foremen.............	700,000	3.2	5.3	2.6	2.1	2.5
Laborers, except farm and mine........	1,656,000	7.6	9.4	7.2	6.9	4.9
Occupation not reported...............	159,000	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	1.1
Other..................................	4,788,000	...	...	...	...	...

Source: *1950 Census of Population,* Vol. IV, *Special Reports,* Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, table 3.

A comparison of the 1950 and 1940 figures on occupation shows that the proportion of husbands in each age group engaged in farming decreased by about one-third during the 1940's. Declines were also recorded for service workers and manual laborers. Compensating increases were made in the proportions in the professions, especially among those under the age of 45 years, and among the skilled, semiskilled, clerical, and sales workers. These changes have emerged as a consequence of numerous factors, including progress in the mechanization of agriculture, changing manpower requirements in the industrial fields, the rising level of education, and the high level of economic activity.

Evidence that family heads shifted from one major occupation group to another during their working lives is found in figures for successive age groups (table 62). In general, changes from younger ages to the central ages are in the direction of movement from occupations requiring less skill and accumulation of wealth to those requiring more. Thus, husbands tend to move from clerical to technical, professional, and managerial positions, from sales workers to managers, from laborers to operatives, from operatives to craftsmen, and from farm laborers to farmers. In the declining years, there is some reverse mobility and some shifting from manual to service occupations. The census data available on a nationwide basis can only suggest the prevailing direction of the changes as revealed by net shifts from one age group to another.[5]

Income of the head. In general, the same factors that make for occupational advancement in the course of a man's economic career also affect the level of his money income. During the first few years of marriage when a couple has many financial demands for establishing a home and bearing the first child or two, the average earnings level of the husband is relatively low (about $2,000 to $3,000 per year). By the end of ten years, his income is generally about one-third to one-half larger and it remains fairly constant through the middle portion of the life cycle.[6] A peak is reached, as a rule, in the period when the head is in his forties and thereafter his total money income is likely to fall by about 10 percent before he reaches the age of 65 (table 63). There are wide variations in income patterns, of course; hence the over-all averages should be interpreted with this in mind. To some extent the lower income among older family heads may be a reflection of their being less well-educated and less skilled persons than those in their middle years. Many of the older family heads entered the United States years ago as immigrants.

Husbands above the age of 65 have a relatively low income level, amounting to about $1,100 to $1,300, on the average. Thus, the income of the husband at advanced ages is only about half as large as that for the

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[5] A study of labor mobility, made in cooperation with the Bureau of the Census, throws more light on the related factors. It was reported by Gladys L. Palmer in *Labor Mobility in Six Cities*, Social Science Research Council, New York, 1954.

[6] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 23, table 10; and Series P–60, No. 14, table 3.

husband with a newly formed family. Although the needs for income are probably smaller among older couples, they probably are not that much smaller.

TABLE **63.**—HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES BY INCOME OF HEAD IN 1949 AND AGE OF HEAD, WITH MEDIAN INCOME BY URBAN AND RURAL RESIDENCE: 1950

Area and income of head in 1949	All husband-wife families		Age of head (years)			
	Number	Percent	Under 35	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
Total reporting..........	31,429,000	...	9,279,000	7,907,000	11,037,000	3,206,000
Percent...............	...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under $1,000.................	4,884,000	15.5	9.7	9.5	15.5	47.5
$1,000 to $1,999.............	5,009,000	15.9	18.2	13.1	15.0	19.4
$2,000 to $2,999.............	7,253,000	23.1	28.7	22.3	21.4	14.3
$3,000 to $3,999.............	7,025,000	22.4	26.1	25.3	21.1	8.4
$4,000 to $4,999.............	3,257,000	10.4	9.8	13.4	10.6	3.5
$5,000 to $5,999.............	1,638,000	5.2	3.8	6.9	6.0	2.2
$6,000 to $6,999.............	741,000	2.4	1.5	3.2	2.8	1.1
$7,000 to $9,999.............	800,000	2.5	1.3	3.3	3.4	1.5
$10,000 and over.............	822,000	2.6	0.8	3.0	4.0	2.1
Median income, total........	$2,803	...	$2,769	$3,202	$2,907	$1,129
Urban.....................	$3,148	...	$3,002	$3,500	$3,294	$1,592
Rural nonfarm..............	$2,428	...	$2,524	$2,817	$2,447	$836
Rural farm.................	$1,607	...	$1,771	$1,910	$1,608	$814

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, table 22.

The extent to which money income of the husband varies during the life cycle among urban, rural-nonfarm, and rural-farm families is quite wide. The general pattern of change is similar for all three groups, however, with the median income of the husband consistently about twice as large in urban areas as on farms and with that in rural-nonfarm areas intermediate. In rural areas, the husband's income tends to drop more sharply after the peak than it does in urban areas. The relatively low income figures for the heads of farm families is a result in part of the use of money income, rather than money income plus income in kind, as the unit of measurement.

Family income. Distributions of family income and of the husband's income become more meaningful when the patterns of the labor force participation rates of wives are considered (see tables 59, 60, 63, and 64). The wife's income is one of the main sources of difference between the family's income and the husband's income. In 1954, about one-fourth of the wives were in the labor force, and the median income in these families was more than $1,000 above the median income of other husband-wife families.[7] When there are small children to be cared for, however, wives are more likely to work on a part-time basis, if at all.[8] In urban areas, family income tends to increase while the husband advances into

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[7] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–60, No. 20, table 3.

[8] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–50, No. 57, table 4. For Current Population Survey data on the combined income of recently married husbands and wives by income of the wife, see National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 39, No. 5, table 9.

middle age, whereas in rural areas family income tends to start declining after the husband reaches about 40 years of age (figure 17).

TABLE 64.—HUSBAND-WIFE FAMILIES BY FAMILY INCOME IN 1949 AND AGE OF HEAD, WITH MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME BY URBAN AND RURAL RESIDENCE: 1950

Area and family income in 1949	All husband-wife families		Age of head (years)			
	Number	Percent	Under 35	35 to 44	45 to 64	65 and over
Total reporting..........	31,471,000	...	9,278,000	7,915,000	11,062,000	3,216,000
Percent..............	...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Under $1,000.................	3,643,000	11.6	7.8	7.4	11.1	34.7
$1,000 to $1,999.............	4,337,000	13.8	14.8	11.2	12.6	21.2
$2,000 to $2,999.............	6,187,000	19.7	24.9	18.9	17.1	15.1
$3,000 to $3,999.............	6,505,000	20.7	25.3	23.0	18.2	10.0
$4,000 to $4,999.............	4,088,000	13.0	13.6	15.6	12.7	5.9
$5,000 to $5,999.............	2,609,000	8.3	7.1	9.8	9.4	4.0
$6,000 to $6,999.............	1,442,000	4.6	3.2	5.3	5.9	2.5
$7,000 to $9,999.............	1,589,000	5.0	2.3	5.2	7.6	3.5
$10,000 and over.............	1,071,000	3.4	1.0	3.5	5.4	3.1
Median income, total.........	$3,241	...	$3,099	$3,545	$3,506	$1,721
Urban.....................	$3,642	...	$3,386	$3,899	$3,985	$2,278
Rural nonfarm.............	$2,732	...	$2,735	$3,120	$2,893	$1,143
Rural farm................	$1,831	...	$1,866	$2,090	$1,915	$985

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, table 23.

FIGURE 17.—MEDIAN FAMILY INCOME IN 1949, BY AGE OF HEAD AND RESIDENCE
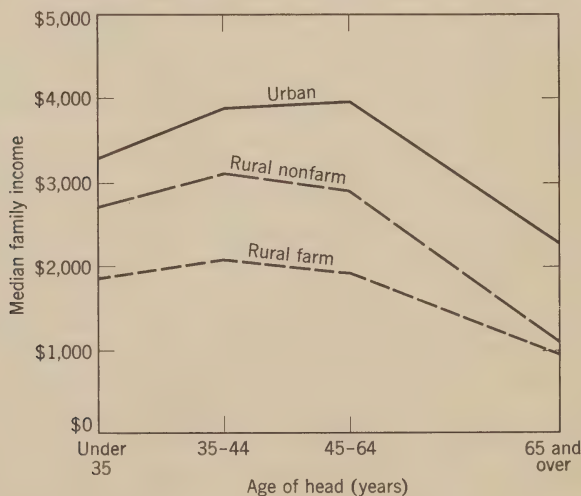
Note: Based on data in table 64.

Family income is also affected by the inclusion of the earnings of sub-family members, and they are most often found among families with the head over 45 years of age. A cross-classification of the income of the subfamily with the income of the family members excluding those in sub-families suggests, however, that subfamilies are more likely to live with

relatives who can afford to help them than they are to live with relatives who need financial aid.[9] Very few parent-child subfamilies are in a position to help their relatives financially and a sizable minority of the families containing this type of subfamily are themselves in straitened circumstances. An unknown, but probably substantial, proportion of families with high incomes include among their members grown children who are employed but not married.

Housing characteristics

About four out of five couples in the early 1950's were able to establish separate living quarters during the first year of marriage, and seven out of eight did so within the first three years (Chapter 3, page 60). Most of those who established separate homes, however, were in living quarters which they rented. Home ownership in 1950 differed between farm and nonfarm families and between nonfarm families living inside standard metropolitan areas and those living outside. Age of head was also a factor (table 65 and figure 18).

TABLE 65.—PERCENT HOME OWNERS, FOR HUSBAND-WIFE PRIMARY FAMILIES WITH NO NON-RELATIVES IN THE HOUSEHOLD, BY FARM RESIDENCE AND RESIDENCE INSIDE AND OUTSIDE STANDARD METROPOLITAN AREAS, BY AGE OF HEAD: 1950

Area	Total husband-wife primary families[1]	Age of head (years)				
		Under 35	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
Total..........................	56.2	38.6	56.0	63.8	69.8	72.5
Urban and rural nonfarm................	54.8	38.3	55.3	62.3	67.8	70.5
Inside standard metropolitan areas...	52.9	37.6	53.7	60.0	64.7	66.0
Outside standard metropolitan areas..	58.1	39.5	58.5	67.3	74.0	76.4
Urban..............................	56.8	36.3	57.6	67.1	73.7	76.8
Rural nonfarm......................	59.5	42.8	59.4	67.6	74.4	76.0
Rural farm............................	64.1	41.1	60.0	71.3	78.9	81.0

[1] Excludes primary families with nonrelatives in the household.

Source: *1950 Census of Housing*, Vol. II, *Nonfarm Housing Characteristics*, Part 1, United States and Divisions, tables A–8, B–8, C–8, and D–8; and Vol. III, *Farm Housing Characteristics*, table 1.

Among primary families on farms, close to two-thirds were home owners in 1950, as compared with a little over one-half for those not on farms. These proportions were considerably higher than the corresponding proportions for 1940, when about 53 percent of the farm households and 41 percent of the nonfarm households were living in homes that they owned.[10] For 50 years after 1890, when 66 percent of the heads of farm households were home owners, there was a steady decline in ownership of farm homes, but between 1940 and 1950 the percent of owners returned to the 1890 level of 66 percent. Among nonfarm households, the general

[9] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 38, table 18.

[10] *1950 Census of Housing*, Vol. I, *General Characteristics*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table L. Figures on home ownership for all households in 1950 differed little from those for all primary families. A home was considered as "owned" if it had been purchased, even though it was not entirely paid for.

trend of home ownership was upward, from a level of 37 percent in 1890 and 1900 to 46 percent in 1930, then downward during the 1930's, but by 1950 it was up to 53 percent. The large increase in home ownership during the 1940's in nonfarm areas probably reflects the movement of increasing numbers of families to homes in the suburbs of the larger cities.

Heads of nonwhite households have been much less likely than heads of white households to be home owners. The proportion of nonwhites with owned homes was about 24 or 25 percent from 1890 to 1940, but in 1950 it was up to 34 percent, with little difference between ownership rates for nonwhite farm and nonfarm households.

FIGURE **18.**—PERCENT HOME OWNERS BY RESIDENCE, AND MEDIAN VALUE OF OWNED HOMES AND MEDIAN MONTHLY RENTAL OF RENTED HOMES, BY AGE OF HOUSEHOLD HEAD: 1950
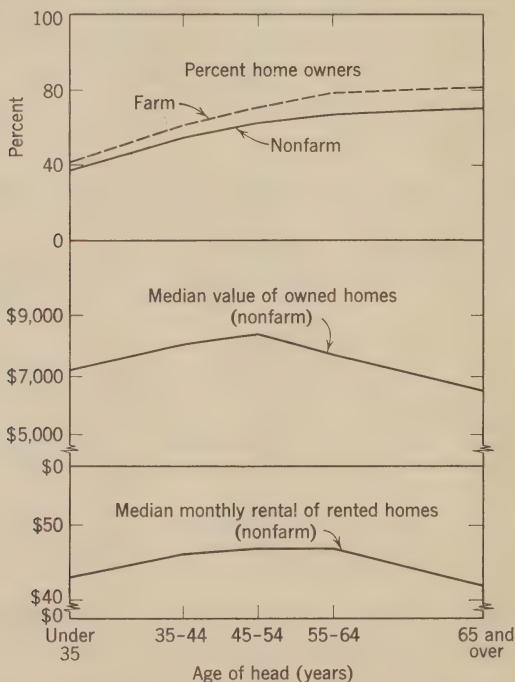
Note: Based on data in tables 65 and 66.

The patterns of home ownership by age of the family head are about the same in all types of areas, with the proportion owning homes increasing steadily as the age of the head advances. In nonfarm areas, however, more of the lifetime increase in home ownership occurs before the head reaches the age of 45 years. Perhaps this circumstance is attributable in part to selective migration from farms to nonfarm areas; probably farm owners are more likely to remain in their farm homes until old age, whereas

tenants and farm laborers are more likely to move into villages or cities in their later years.

Changes in housing conditions during the life cycle of the family are somewhat different for owners and renters (table 66 and figure 18). In 1950 about 83 percent of the home owners, as compared with 33 percent of the renters, lived in detached homes occupied by their household alone. The proportion of owners who lived in such houses decreased somewhat with age. Perhaps older couples were more likely to have sub-divided their house after their children had left home and to have rented a part of the house as an apartment or flat; doing so would remove them from the "1-unit" class. Among both owners and renters, however, the proportion in 1-unit detached homes was relatively high for heads between 35 and 44 years old when most of the families have growing children.

TABLE **66.**—Selected Housing Characteristics of Urban and Rural-Nonfarm Husband-Wife Primary Families with No Nonrelatives in the Household, by Age of Head and Tenure: 1950

Subject	Urban and rural-nonfarm husband-wife primary families[1]	Age of head (years)				
		Under 35	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
HOME OWNERS						
Percent in 1-unit, detached dwellings..	83.2	86.2	85.4	83.1	79.2	79.7
Percent in dilapidated dwellings.......	3.8	3.9	3.8	3.5	3.5	5.0
Percent with 5 rooms or more...........	70.7	55.3	72.1	77.2	77.3	73.5
Median size of household..............	3.3	3.6	4.0	3.3	2.6	2.3
Median value of home[2]................	$7,638	$7,207	$8,100	$8,419	$7,724	$6,511
Median family income in 1949..........	$3,683	$3,542	$3,969	$4,185	$3,691	$1,962
Percent with value twice 1949 family income or more[2].....................	40.9	40.7	38.5	36.8	41.7	53.1
RENTERS						
Percent in 1-unit, detached dwellings..	33.2	32.4	35.2	32.9	30.3	36.4
Percent in dilapidated dwellings.......	9.3	8.9	9.6	9.2	8.9	11.4
Percent with 5 rooms or more...........	32.5	22.6	37.4	41.6	43.3	38.0
Median size of household..............	3.1	3.1	3.7	3.1	2.5	2.3
Median gross monthly rent[2]...........	$45	$43	$46	$47	$47	$42
Median family income in 1949..........	$3,208	$3,060	$3,467	$3,601	$3,290	$1,722
Percent with gross rent one-fifth of 1949 family income or more[2]..........	28.0	29.6	24.7	24.0	28.0	41.9

[1] Excludes primary families with nonrelatives in the household.

[2] For primary families in 1-dwelling-unit structures in 1-dwelling-unit properties.

Source: *1950 Census of Housing*, Vol. II, *Nonfarm Housing Characteristics*, Part 1, United States and Divisions, tables A–1, A–3, A–8, and A–9.

The quality of housing, as measured by the percent in dilapidated units, was a little above average for home owners between 45 and 64 years old. Renters were more than twice as likely as owners to be living in dilapidated units. The highest proportion with dilapidated dwelling units, among both renters and owners, was found among families with the head 65 years old or older.

About twice as large a proportion of owners as renters had homes with five or more rooms. The proportion with five or more rooms was markedly higher among families with the head above age 35 than among those with the head under 35. Only a relatively slight tendency to move to homes with fewer rooms in the later years, when the size of household declines, was noted among either owners or renters.

The median value of owned homes was at a peak for owner families with the head 45 to 54 years of age—the age period when family income was also the highest. Little variation in rental payments with advancing age was found among families with the head under 65 years old. The younger renters include many who later buy homes of their own; hence, there is apparently a selective factor operating which tends to keep those with lower incomes in the renter group.

The relatively low value and rental figures for families with heads 65 years old and over are especially noteworthy. Many of these families do not move out of their aging homes, partly because they prefer surroundings that are familiar and partly because they are less likely to seek new places of employment that would require them to move. An additional factor may be that older persons generally have less energy to exert on the upkeep of their homes and hence are more likely than younger persons to allow their property to deteriorate. Moreover, families with heads in the oldest age group have the smallest incomes and therefore the least money to use on housing. Despite the lower rentals paid by tenants in old age, the proportion of their income that goes for rent is higher than that for any other age group.

It is appropriate to call attention again to the fact that the discussion in this chapter has been based largely on data classified by age of the family head whereas it would have been preferable, in many respects, to have had data for family heads in first marriages classified by duration of marriage. Refinement of the data to show separately those with early, intermediate, and late first marriages would have provided additional improvement. In the present study, the data were obtained on a cross-section basis, that is, different families were at the various stages of the life cycle as of a given time. This approach has certain advantages and certain disadvantages as compared with the life history approach (that is, following the life experiences of particular families). Only the cross-section approach was feasible in the present study. It would be very desirable to have data from a nationwide sample on the life histories of families to check the conclusions drawn from the cross-section data.

FIRST MARRIAGES AND REMARRIAGES

Simultaneous increases in both marriage and divorce took place in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century. The net effect was a gradual increase in the proportion married up to 1940, and a marked increase during the 1940's and early 1950's. Thus, although more of the initial marital unions were less permanent at the midcentury than in earlier decades, a growing proportion of persons with broken marriages were forming unions with new partners. This pattern of change was not shared equally, however, by persons in all social and economic classes.

Upward trend in marriage

One of the chief obstacles to a proper understanding of trends in marital status is the changing age composition. The steady decline in mortality rates over several decades, the downward trend in the birth rate during most of this time, the influx of millions of adult immigrants during the early years of the present century, and the disturbing effects of the depression and war periods all left their marks on the adult age profile. There had not been time, by the mid-1950's, for the upward movement of the birth rate during the 1940's to leave its imprint on that part of the age pyramid that includes persons of marriageable age. The full impact of this upswing in births on the trend in marriages will probably not be noticeable until the 1960's, and the main effects on the trend in numbers of marriages broken by separation, divorce, and widowhood will come still later.

Long-time and recent changes. The sharp decline in the percent single and the complementary rise in the percent married between 1940 and 1950 were perhaps the most striking changes in the marital status distribution during the last two generations (table 67). This finding is brought into sharp relief in the marital status distributions that have been standardized for age. (The standardized figures show what the marital status distribution at a given date would have been if the age distribution at that date had been the same as in 1940.) The changes from 1940 to 1954 in the percent single and in the percent married, on this basis, greatly exceeded those during the entire half century before 1940. Changes during the early 1950's suggest, however, that these proportions may be tending to stabilize. Evidently the combination of circumstances surrounding the population in the middle 1950's was more conducive to

marriage than that of any other period on record. It is beyond the scope of this monograph, however, to assess the relative importance in this connection of such factors as the world political situation, national economic prosperity, improvement in the housing supply, suburban development, the rise in home ownership and the attendant increase in amount of time devoted to home life, changing attitudes toward the desirability of parenthood, and changing practices concerning the employment of married women and of mothers.

TABLE 67.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY MARITAL STATUS AND SEX: CIVILIAN POPULATION, APRIL 1954, MARCH 1950, AND APRIL 1947, AND TOTAL POPULATION, APRIL 1940, APRIL 1930, AND JUNE 1890

Year	Male					Female				
	Total	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced	Total	Single	Married	Widowed	Divorced
Unstandardized:										
1954................	100.0	23.5	70.6	3.9	2.0	100.0	18.5	67.0	12.2	2.3
1950................	100.0	26.2	68.2	4.0	1.6	100.0	19.6	66.1	12.1	2.2
1947................	100.0	28.2	66.2	4.1	1.6	100.0	22.0	64.2	11.6	2.1
1940................	100.0	34.8	59.7	4.2	1.2	100.0	27.6	59.5	11.3	1.6
1930................	[1]100.0	35.8	58.4	4.5	1.1	[1]100.0	28.4	59.5	10.8	1.3
1890................	[1]100.0	43.6	52.1	3.8	0.2	[1]100.0	34.1	54.8	10.6	0.4
Standardized for age:[2]										
1954................	100.0	28.4	66.7	3.2	1.8	100.0	22.0	65.8	9.8	2.2
1950................	100.0	29.4	65.5	3.6	1.5	100.0	22.5	64.8	10.6	2.1
1947................	100.0	30.9	63.9	3.7	1.5	100.0	24.1	63.1	10.7	2.0
1940................	100.0	34.8	59.7	4.2	1.2	100.0	27.6	59.5	11.3	1.6
1930................	[1]100.0	34.7	59.1	4.9	1.1	[1]100.0	26.9	59.7	12.0	1.3
1890................	[1]100.0	36.7	57.9	5.0	0.2	[1]100.0	27.8	57.7	14.0	0.4

[1] Includes "marital status not reported," not shown separately.

[2] 1940 age distribution used as standard.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 56, table A, and No. 41, table 2.

The effect of the aging of the population on the proportion of widows among females 14 years old and over is quite noteworthy. Thus, the unstandardized figures imply that the proportion widowed has been increasing through the decades, whereas the age-standardized figures show that, when the age distribution of females is held constant, the percent widowed has actually declined steadily from 1890 to 1954. In interpreting this finding, it seems probable that the lengthening period of joint survival of marital partners, pointed out in Chapter 3, must have played an important part; other things being equal, the longer couples remain married, the lower the proportion widowed will be. Another factor, to be discussed at greater length in the next section, is an upward trend in the proportion of persons who have remarried.

The figures in table 68 afford another means of appraising the changes in marital status during the 1940's and early 1950's. Thus, among females 14 years old and over, there were about 3.2 million fewer single, 3.5 million more married, 600,000 fewer widowed, and 350,000 more divorced in 1953 than there would have been if the marital status distribution within each age group had been the same in 1953 as in 1940.

(Corresponding data for men are not shown, in part because of the disturbing effect on the figures of changes in the size of the Armed Forces not covered by the basic data.)

FIGURE **19.**—MARITAL STATUS OF FEMALES 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER, STANDARDIZED FOR AGE: 1890 TO 1954
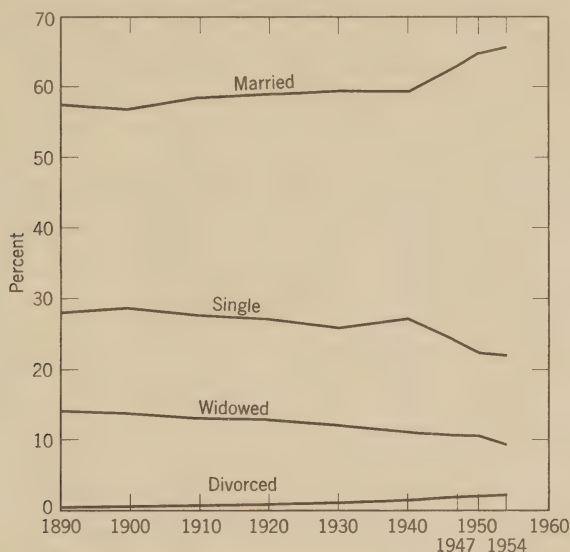
Note: Based on data from same sources as table 67.

Close to three-fourths of the excess of married women in 1953, as defined here, occurred among women under 35 years old and this excess can be accounted for entirely by the corresponding increase in first marriages; the excess of divorced women in this age group was counterbalanced by a deficit of similar magnitude in the number of widows of the same age. Above the age of 35 years, a part of the excess of married women can be accounted for, also, in terms of an increase in first marriages, but some of it apparently resulted from an increase in the proportion of persons with broken marriages who remarried. Undoubtedly a part of the excess of married women in their middle years in 1953 reflects, to some extent, first marriages during the 1940's that would have occurred during the 1930's if economic conditions had not been so unfavorable.

To what extent the deficit of widows in 1953, as defined here, was the consequence of longer joint survival of couples in their first marriages, on the one hand, and of higher remarriage rates among persons with broken marriages, on the other hand, cannot be inferred precisely from the data available. The hypothesis seems plausible, however, that the relatively small deficit of widows 55 years old and over arose largely because of increased longevity because marriage rates at this age are very

low, and that the relatively large deficit of widows 35 to 54 years old arose mainly from higher remarriage rates among widows after 1940.

TABLE **68.**—EXCESS OR DEFICIT OF FEMALES 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER IN EACH MARITAL STATUS CATEGORY IN 1953, AS COMPARED WITH NUMBERS EXPECTED IF THE PERCENT DISTRIBUTION BY MARITAL STATUS IN EACH AGE GROUP HAD BEEN THE SAME IN 1953 AS IN 1940

Age and marital status	Excess (+) or deficit (−) in 1953		Age and marital status	Excess (+) or deficit (−) in 1953	
	Number	Percent		Number	Percent
Single.................	−3,223,000	100.0	Married................	+3,489,000	100.0
14 to 34 years.............	−2,441,000	75.7	14 to 34 years.............	+2,433,000	69.7
14 to 17 years...........	−40,000	1.2	14 to 17 years...........	+32,000	0.9
18 and 19 years..........	−242,000	7.5	18 and 19 years..........	+245,000	7.0
20 to 24 years...........	[2]−980,000	30.4	20 to 24 years...........	[2]+985,000	28.2
25 to 29 years...........	−727,000	22.6	25 to 29 years...........	+703,000	20.1
30 to 34 years...........	−452,000	14.0	30 to 34 years...........	+468,000	13.4
35 years and over...........	−782,000	24.3	35 years and over...........	+1,056,000	30.3
35 to 44 years...........	−398,000	12.3	35 to 44 years...........	+499,000	14.3
45 to 54 years...........	−138,000	4.3	45 to 54 years...........	+184,000	5.3
55 to 64 years...........	−79,000	2.5	55 to 64 years...........	+64,000	1.8
65 to 74 years...........	−107,000	3.3	65 to 74 years...........	+253,000	7.3
75 years and over........	−60,000	1.9	75 years and over........	+56,000	1.6
Widowed................	−617,000	[1]100.0	Divorced[3]............	+349,000	100.0
14 to 34 years.............	−71,000	11.5	14 to 34 years.............	+78,000	22.3
35 to 44 years.............	−182,000	29.5	35 to 44 years.............	+82,000	23.5
45 to 54 years.............	−209,000	33.9	45 to 54 years.............	+163,000	46.7
55 to 64 years.............	−8,000	1.3	55 years and over..........	+26,000	7.4
65 to 74 years.............	−157,000	25.4			
75 years and over..........	+10,000	1.6			

[1] Adds to more than 100.0 percent because number for women 75 years old and over is positive whereas other numbers are negative.

[2] To illustrate, there were 980,000 fewer single women 20 to 24 years old, and 985,000 more married women of this age, in 1953, than would have beeen expected if the percent single and the percent married among women of this age had been the same in 1953 as in 1940.

[3] A part of the excess may have resulted from an increase in the completeness of reporting of divorced persons; probably a smaller proportion of divorced persons in 1953 than in 1940 were reported as married, widowed, or single or were missed in the enumeration. For a discussion of the quality of census reports on divorced persons, see Paul H, Jacobson, *Some Statistical Patterns of Marriage in the United States*, Ph.D. thesis, Columbia University, 1952, pp. 11–16.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 50, table 1.

The increase during the 1940's in the proportion married was much greater among the well-educated than among the poorly educated population. Table 69 presents figures on white persons at the ages when a large proportion of the first marriages occur (20 to 24 years old) for 1940 and 1950 and also for persons ten years older (30 to 34 years old) at the two dates. There was little change in the proportion married among those with fewer than five years of schooling, that is, among persons sometimes referred to as "functional illiterates.". With one exception, the largest increases in the percent married were among high school graduates who had not gone to college and among college graduates.

The presence of more of the persons 20 to 24 years old in college in 1950 than in 1940 must have affected adversely the gains in marriage for persons in this educational level. On the other hand, the number of married college students must have been far higher in 1950 than in 1940.

Among both men and women college graduates in their early 20's, the proportion married doubled during the 1940's. Among persons 30 to 34 years old, the gain in percent married was larger for college graduates than that for any other educational level; the gain for women who were college graduates was especially outstanding and as a consequence the gap between the proportion married for men and for women at the college level narrowed considerably. The decreasing reluctance of employers to give clerical and professional jobs to married women has very likely had an important bearing on the increase in marriage of women with high school diplomas or college training.

TABLE **69.**—PERCENT MARRIED, FOR WHITE PERSONS 20 TO 24 YEARS OLD AND 30 TO 34 YEARS OLD, BY YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED AND SEX: 1950 AND 1940

[Minus sign (−) denotes decrease]

Years of school completed and sex	20 to 24 years old			30 to 34 years old			Cohort increase: 30 to 34 in 1950 minus 20 to 24 in 1940
	1950	1940	Increase	1950	1940	Increase	
White men[1]....................	39.6	26.3	13.3	84.6	77.4	7.2	58.3
Elementary: 0 to 4 years.......	39.0	34.2	4.8	74.7	73.9	0.8	40.5
5 to 8 years.......	46.4	31.7	14.7	83.0	77.0	6.0	51.3
High school: 1 to 3 years.......	49.5	31.0	18.5	86.9	80.2	6.7	55.9
4 years............	38.2	22.5	15.7	85.9	77.3	8.6	63.4
College: 1 to 3 years.......	24.0	13.9	10.1	86.4	79.1	7.3	72.5
4 years or more....	33.1	16.2	16.9	84.9	75.6	9.3	68.7
White women[1]..................	65.9	50.1	15.8	86.5	80.4	6.1	36.4
Elementary: 0 to 4 years.......	64.6	59.8	4.8	77.5	78.8	−1.3	17.7
5 to 8 years.......	76.0	62.3	13.7	88.2	84.7	3.5	25.9
High school: 1 to 3 years.......	78.5	62.0	16.5	89.5	84.1	5.4	27.5
4 years............	65.2	43.0	22.2	86.9	77.4	9.5	43.9
College: 1 to 3 years.......	44.0	27.5	16.5	84.6	76.1	8.5	57.1
4 years or more....	45.7	22.9	22.8	77.7	62.9	14.8	54.8

[1] Native white for 1940.

Source: *1950 Census of Population,* Vol. IV, *Special Reports,* Part 5, Chapter B, Education, tables 7 and 8; and *1940 Census of Population, Educational Attainment by Economic Characteristics and Marital Status,* table 37.

Ten-year gains in marriage for persons who were 20 to 24 in 1940 and 30 to 34 in 1950 are shown in the last column of table 69. The pattern of differences shown in this column provides additional evidence of a positive relationship between the increase in marriage during the 1940's and amount of education. This relationship has significance in many areas of family living, but perhaps most of all in its implications of a tend-ency for better educated white persons to form families and have children in more nearly the same proportions as less well-educated white persons.

Among nonwhite persons the gains in the percent married during the 1940's were, in most instances, lower than those for white persons. At the younger ages, the proportion married was higher among nonwhites in both 1940 and 1950, perhaps partly because, on the average, nonwhite persons drop out of school at an earlier age. There was little color dif-

ference between the proportions married at ages 30 to 34 years in either 1940 or 1950 for all education levels combined. The gains in percent married among nonwhites during the 1940's tended to be least among those with very little education.

Differential increases in remarriage. Not until the 1940 Census did any nationwide data exist on first marriage and remarriage. At that time, data on this subject were compiled from both the 1940 and 1910 Censuses. These and similar data for 1950 were assembled mainly to study fertility trends and differentials, yet they provide a basis for studying trends in the proportion of married women who had married more than once.

Among native white and Negro women 15 to 44 years old who were married and living with their husbands, about 6 percent in 1910 had remarried; three decades later, in 1940, this figure had gone up to about 9 percent. By the end of one more decade, in 1950, the corresponding figure for women of all races had climbed to about 13 percent.[1] These data indicate that the proportion remarried among women of childbearing age had approximately doubled in the course of the 40 years before 1950 and that about half of this change had occurred during the 1940's.

There is evidence that the rising proportion of remarried persons may be accounted for in large part by remarriages of divorced persons. Jacobson has shown that the rate of marital dissolutions brought about through divorce and death (and therefore the proportion of persons eligible for remarriage) was virtually stationary at around 30 per 1,000 couples per year between 1910 and 1942; this level was broken, however, by a large rise in 1918, caused by deaths during the influenza epidemic. There was a sustained rise from 1943 to 1946, followed by a sharp drop to a point near the long-time average.[2] He has shown, furthermore, that this relatively stable rate of total dissolutions has resulted from the counterbalancing effects of an almost steady decline in the death rate and an almost steady rise in the divorce rate.

It would be instructive to see a parallel analysis of marriage dissolution for couples with the husband and wife under 50 years old; persons in this age range with broken marriages are the most likely to remarry. The rates of dissolution by death for this more restricted group would be far smaller than those by divorce. This analysis would, no doubt, show a rising rate of marriage dissolutions from death and divorce combined for these young and middle-aged couples during the approximately 40-year period. In turn, it can be reasoned that the upward trend in remarriages among women 15 to 44 years old has come about in large measure through

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[1] *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 5, Chapter C, Fertility, tables 16 and 17; and *1940 Census of Population, Women by Number of Children Ever Born*, tables 13 to 16.

[2] Paul H. Jacobson, "Differentials in Divorce by Duration of Marriage and Size of Family," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. XV, No. 2, April 1950, pp. 235–244.

the growing number and proportion of divorced persons who were subject to remarriage. This inference is further supported by the standardized figures in table 67 that show an upward trend through the decades in the proportion of divorced persons and a downward trend in the proportion of widowed persons.

The proportion remarried has been consistently much higher among nonwhite women than among white women but, in relative terms, the color differences have been diminishing (table 70 and figure 20). In 1910, the proportion remarried among Negro women 15 to 44 years old who were living with their husbands was close to three times that for native white women of comparable age and marital status. By 1940, the ratio had fallen to a point only a little over twice that for native whites and by 1950 it was less than twice as high.[3]

TABLE **70.**—PERCENT REMARRIED, AMONG WOMEN MARRIED AND HUSBAND PRESENT, BY AGE AND COLOR: 1950, 1940, AND 1910

Age at census	White			Nonwhite		
	1950	1940[1]	1910[1]	1950	1940[2]	1910[2]
15 to 59 years..........	12.9	(3)	(3)	24.0	(3)	(3)
15 to 44 years..............	11.7	7.8	5.2	21.1	15.2	14.4
15 to 19 years............	4.8	1.9	0.5	5.6	3.1	1.4
20 to 24 years............	7.3	3.6	1.5	10.9	6.8	5.3
25 to 29 years............	10.4	6.1	3.4	17.7	13.0	12.2
30 to 34 years............	12.0	8.6	5.7	22.9	19.0	18.3
35 to 39 years............	14.1	10.4	7.7	27.6	22.7	21.9
40 to 44 years............	15.6	11.3	9.2	31.6	25.8	26.9
45 to 59 years..............	15.9	(3)	(3)	34.2	(3)	(3)

[1] Native white.

[2] Negro.

[3] Not available in specified age detail.

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 5, Chapter C, Fertility, tables 16 and 17; and *1940 Census of Population, Women by Number of Children Ever Born*, tables 13 to 16.

By 1950, most of the color differences in remarriage had disappeared among women under 25 years old. Whether or not this finding provides a reliable clue to future trends in color differentials on this subject remains to be seen. It is entirely possible that numerous mothers of illegitimate children have reported themselves as remarried after they had married for the first time. To the extent that this phenomenon is real, the future course of changes in the reported percent remarried may be expected to reflect simultaneous changes in illegitimacy rates.

[3] There was apparently little change in the percent remarried within age groups among nonwhite women between 1910 and 1940, whereas there was a substantial increase in the percent remarried among white women in each age group. Some of this apparent difference may, however, be related to the especially high rate of nonresponse on number of times married in 1940, as compared with 1910, for women of each race. Moreover, the large increases in the percent remarried between 1940 and 1950 may be attributable, in part, to the fact that the nonresponses in 1950 were distributed among the responses by a complex system, whereas they were not for 1940 or 1910. This system is explained in the text of the report, *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 5, Chapter C, Fertility.

FIGURE **20.**—PERCENT REMARRIED AMONG WOMEN MARRIED AND HUSBAND PRESENT,
BY AGE AND COLOR: 1950, 1940, AND 1910
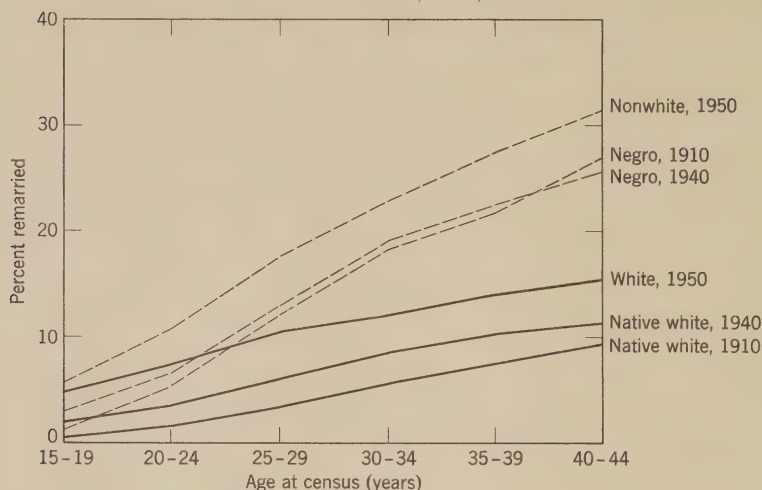
Note: Based on data in table 70.

The proportion of ever-married women in 1954 who had married more
than once was virtually constant at 18 or 19 percent for those who entered
their first marriages between 1900 and 1924 (table 71).   Probably rela-
tively few of these older women will remarry after 1954.   For those with
more recent first marriages, however, the proportion who had meantime
remarried appears, superficially, to have declined sharply.   This apparent
decline is due largely, of course, to the fact that these women had not been
exposed for so long a time to the risk of marriage dissolution and, hence,
to remarriage.   It may well be that by the time these younger women
have been married as long as those who entered marriage during the first
two decades of the century, a much larger percentage of them will have
remarried.

Among women with first marriages soon after the turn of the century,
those who were relatively young at the time of marriage (and who, there-
fore, tended to have married relatively young men) had a better chance
to have survived and to be still living with their spouses in 1954.   In
general, the proportion no longer living with their husbands increased as
the length of time since the first marriage increased; this was true for
women married once and for those married more than once.

The close relationship between early marriage and instability of mar-
riage is brought out clearly in table 72 and figure 21.   A very distinct
negative correlation is shown between age at first marriage and the pro-
portion whose initial marriages had been broken by 1954.   Most of the
variation, however, was among those with first marriages below the age

of 22 years. For women who first married before they were 18, the proportion remarried was about half again as high as that for women who first married at 18 or 19; in turn, for those who first married at 18 or 19, the proportion remarried was about half again as high as that for women who first married at 20 or 21. Perhaps even more impressive is the finding that the proportion of remarried women among those who first married below the age of 18 years was about three times as high as that for women who first married between the ages of 22 and 24 years. These relationships were about the same whether the first marriage took place in the 1920's, the 1930's, or the 1940's.

TABLE **71.**—Ever-Married Women Married Once or Remarried, by Period of First Marriage, and Presence of Husband: April 1954

[Numbers in thousands]

Period of first marriage	All ever-married women in 1954		Married once			Married more than once		
	Number	Per-cent	Total	Husband present	Other	Total	Husband present	Other
Total..............	48,209	...	41,059	31,944	9,115	7,150	5,225	1,925
Percent........	...	100.0	85.2	66.3	18.9	14.8	10.8	4.0
1950 to 1954...........	4,663	100.0	97.5	84.7	[1]12.8	2.5	2.1	0.4
1945 to 1949...........	6,599	100.0	92.7	84.5	8.2	7.3	6.6	0.8
1940 to 1944...........	6,128	100.0	85.6	76.6	9.0	14.4	13.0	1.4
1935 to 1939...........	5,379	100.0	84.6	74.4	10.2	15.4	13.2	2.3
1930 to 1934...........	4,522	100.0	81.7	69.9	11.8	18.3	15.1	3.2
1925 to 1929...........	4,452	100.0	79.5	64.3	15.2	20.5	15.9	4.6
1920 to 1924...........	4,150	100.0	81.7	62.6	19.1	18.3	13.2	5.1
1915 to 1919...........	3,405	100.0	81.7	54.5	27.2	18.3	13.2	5.1
1910 to 1914...........	2,997	100.0	80.6	50.4	30.2	19.4	11.5	7.9
1905 to 1909...........	2,304	100.0	81.0	40.9	40.1	19.0	10.2	8.8
1900 to 1904...........	1,688	100.0	81.2	29.7	51.5	18.8	7.6	11.2
Before 1900............	1,922	100.0	80.5	15.0	65.5	19.5	4.8	14.7

[1] Includes numerous married women with husbands absent in the Armed Forces.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 67, table 13, and unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data.

First marriages contracted at an unusually advanced age also appear to be of relatively short duration (table 72). This statement is based on the relatively large proportion of women in 1954 who were not living with their husbands, among those reported as married for the first time at ages 30 and over and who had been married only once. (Some of these women may have erroneously reported age at remarriage instead of at first marriage, but this probably introduced only a small amount of bias.) Undoubtedly many of these women who were themselves rather old at first marriage had married still older men and had meantime lost their husbands through death. To what extent the high dissolution rate among women who were over 30 at first marriage is attributable to deaths, on the one hand, and to divorce, on the other, cannot be ascertained from the available data. In any case, the marriages of such women are comparatively brief, on the average. Therefore these women have family life cycles

much different from those of other women.   Furthermore, the remarriage rate among these women is quite low, as a rule.   Perhaps the characteristics of a woman that make her slow to enter first marriage likewise minimize her chances of remarriage.

TABLE 72.—EVER-MARRIED WOMEN MARRIED ONCE OR REMARRIED, BY AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE, PERIOD OF FIRST MARRIAGE, AND PRESENCE OF HUSBAND: APRIL 1954

[Numbers in thousands]

Period of first marriage and age at first marriage	All ever-married women in 1954		Married once			Married more than once		
	Number	Per-cent	Total	Husband present	Other	Total	Husband present	Other
1940 TO 1949								
Total..............	12,727	...	11,357	10,270	1,087	1,370	1,232	138
Percent........	...	100.0	89.2	80.7	8.5	10.8	9.7	1.1
14 to 17 years.........	1,956	100.0	78.1	67.3	10.8	21.9	19.2	2.7
18 and 19 years........	3,017	100.0	86.6	79.1	7.5	13.4	11.7	1.7
20 and 21 years........	2,646	100.0	91.4	84.1	7.3	8.6	8.2	0.4
22 to 24 years.........	2,472	100.0	93.5	84.3	9.3	6.5	5.9	0.6
25 to 29 years.........	1,731	100.0	94.2	86.4	7.7	5.8	5.5	0.3
30 years and over......	905	100.0	94.7	84.1	10.6	5.3	5.0	0.3
1930 TO 1939								
Total..............	9,901	...	8,244	7,164	1,080	1,657	1,389	268
Percent........	...	100.0	83.3	72.4	10.9	16.7	14.0	2.7
14 to 17 years.........	1,640	100.0	68.6	58.3	10.3	31.4	27.3	4.1
18 and 19 years........	2,296	100.0	78.8	69.3	9.5	21.2	17.2	4.0
20 and 21 years........	2,092	100.0	85.7	74.6	11.1	14.3	11.9	2.4
22 to 24 years.........	2,020	100.0	89.4	78.3	11.0	10.6	8.9	1.8
25 to 29 years.........	1,332	100.0	91.0	80.9	10.2	8.9	7.4	1.6
30 years and over......	521	100.0	95.8	76.4	19.4	4.2	3.6	0.6
1920 TO 1929								
Total..............	8,602	...	6,931	5,461	1,470	1,671	1,255	416
Percent........	...	100.0	80.6	63.5	17.1	19.4	14.6	4.8
14 to 17 years.........	1,626	100.0	61.9	49.6	12.2	38.1	29.7	8.4
18 and 19 years........	1,943	100.0	77.4	65.1	12.2	22.6	18.0	4.7
20 and 21 years........	1,841	100.0	84.0	65.9	18.0	16.0	10.8	5.2
22 to 24 years.........	1,699	100.0	89.5	69.7	19.8	10.5	7.8	2.6
25 to 29 years.........	1,010	100.0	89.3	69.6	19.7	10.7	7.4	3.3
30 years and over......	483	100.0	93.8	59.6	34.2	6.2	3.3	2.9

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 67, table 13, and unpublished tabulation of Current Population Survey data.

As a concluding observation on this phase of the discussion of remarriage, it is appropriate to call attention to the fact that the great majority of people go through life with their original spouse.   Among women who entered their first marriages during the 1920's and who had, by 1954, already passed through about 30 years of exposure to the risk of losing their husbands by divorce or death, four out of every five had married only once.   Moreover, among those in this group who had been above the age of 21 at the time of first marriage, fully nine out of every ten had not remarried by 1954.   These facts point to the essential stability of marriages in the United States, especially of those contracted after the woman has passed her teens.

FIGURE 21.—PERCENT REMARRIED BY 1954, AMONG WOMEN WITH FIRST MARRIAGES BETWEEN 1920 AND 1949, BY AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE
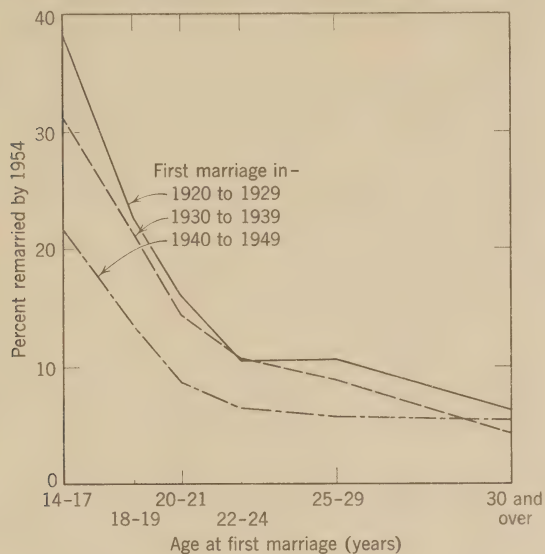
Note: Based on data in table 72.

Factors related to age at marriage

The pattern of age at first marriage is quite different from that of age at remarriage for a number of reasons, including the obvious differences between the age composition of persons subject to first marriage and remarriage. Half of the first marriages take place within an age span of 4 or 5 years (Chapter 3, table 35). By contrast, the central half of the ages at remarriage cover a span of 10 or 12 years (table 73). Disregarding the very young and the relatively old, who seldom marry, the range of ages of those who may be called actively subject to first marriage encompasses less than 20 years, whereas the range of ages of persons actively subject to remarriage encompasses 30 or 40 years.

Sex and color. The gap between the median ages at first marriage and remarriage is wider for men than for women. (See tables cited in preceding paragraph.) For men, this gap amounts to about 15 or 16 years, depending on the source of the figures; for women, it amounts to about 12 to 14 years. The main factor behind this difference is probably the higher proportion of older men than older women who remarry. One-fourth of the men who remarry are over 50 years old at remarriage, whereas one-fourth of the women who remarry are over 45 years old at remarriage. Since husbands are usually older than their wives at first marriage and since mortality rates are higher for men, age for age, they

generally die before their wives. As a result, there are far more widows than widowers in late middle age. It follows that, among those in this broad age range who are interested in remarriage, the widowers have more prospective partners to choose among than the widows do. These circumstances are no doubt related to the relatively wide gap, on the average, between the ages of spouses among those who remarry.

TABLE **73.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS IN THE UNITED STATES WITH REMARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY 1950 AND APRIL 1953, AND OF PERSONS IN 18 REPORTING STATES WITH REMARRIAGES IN 1953, BY AGE AT REMARRIAGE, BY SEX

Age at remarriage and sex	CPS[1]	NOVS[2]	Age at remarriage and sex	CPS[1]	NOVS[2]
MEN			WOMEN		
Total....................	100.0	100.0	Total....................	100.0	100.0
Under 25 years.............	8.5	7.3	Under 20 years.............	4.0	3.2
25 to 29 years.............	16.7	15.5	20 to 24 years.............	15.9	14.9
30 to 34 years.............	13.2	14.7	25 to 29 years.............	21.8	17.0
35 to 39 years.............	15.4	13.3	30 to 34 years.............	13.4	15.2
40 to 44 years.............	12.5	11.4	35 to 39 years.............	14.6	13.3
45 to 54 years.............	17.5	17.7	40 to 44 years.............	9.1	11.0
55 to 64 years.............	11.1	11.5	45 to 54 years.............	12.9	14.6
65 years and over...........	5.1	8.5	55 years and over...........	8.4	10.8
Median[3]......................	38.4	39.7	Median[3]......................	32.7	34.9
First quartile.............	29.9	30.8	First quartile.............	26.2	26.9
Third quartile.............	50.0	51.9	Third quartile.............	42.9	45.2

[1] According to Current Population Survey for April 1953.

[2] According to statistics from marriage records for 1953 compiled by the National Office of Vital Statistics.

[3] Medians computed from data on single years of age at remarriage.

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports,* Vol. 39, No. 3, table 5 (based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census); and Vol. 42, No. 5, tables B and 4 (based on vital statistics records).

The median age at marriage is at a minimum, if both the husband and wife are entering their first marriage; in this event, the median ages at marriage for the husband and wife in the late 1940's and early 1950's were about 24 and 21, respectively (table 74). (These figures are for persons who had been married and living together for varying lengths of time up to 7½ years.) Conversely, the median age at marriage is at a maximum, if both spouses are remarrying (42 and 37, respectively). The range between the median ages for these extreme groups is about 19 years for men and about 16 years for women. Where one spouse is marrying for the first time and the other is remarrying, the median ages at marriage are intermediate. If the husband is marrying for the first time and the wife is remarrying, the median ages of both are about 29 years. By contrast, if the husband is remarrying and the wife is marrying for the first time, the median age of the husband is about 8 years above that of the wife (33 as compared with 25). This difference is somewhat greater than that (5 years) between the median ages of the spouses where both are remarrying. Thus, when a woman enters remarriage with a single man, she tends to marry someone near her own age; however, when a man enters remarriage with a single woman, he tends to marry someone several years

younger than himself. More information on the gap between the ages of spouses at marriage will be presented later in this chapter in terms of direct measures of difference.

TABLE **74.**—MEDIAN AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE AND REMARRIAGE, FOR COUPLES WITH MARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE: JUNE 1954

First marriage or remarriage	Median age of husband at current marriage	First marriage or remarriage	Median age of wife at current marriage
Husband married once...............	24.2	Wife married once....................	20.8
Husband remarried...................	39.3	Wife remarried......................	33.0
Husband married once:		Wife married once:	
Wife married once..............	23.7	Husband married once............	20.7
Wife remarried.................	29.5	Husband remarried..............	24.9
Husband remarried:		Wife remarried:	
Wife married once..............	32.8	Husband married once............	29.3
Wife remarried.................	42.4	Husband remarried..............	37.1

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, tables 13, 14, and 24. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

Little color difference was noted in age at first marriage (Chapter 3, table 36), but whites tended to be about two years younger than nonwhites at the time of the most recent remarriage, according to data from the same source as the vital statistics (NOVS) data shown in table 73. The median ages at remarriage for 1953 were as follows: white men, 39.4; nonwhite men, 41.6; white women, 34.7; and nonwhite women, 36.4. The color differences in age at remarriage probably reflect the fact that nonwhites tend to remarry a greater number of times than whites and, therefore, to be older at the time of their last marriage (Chapter 7, table 94).

Educational level. Age at marriage seems to bear a curvilinear relationship with educational level. This relationship is most apparent for the urban population (table 75). Among first marriages, the median age at marriage was above average for those with no high school training; it reached a low point among those who dropped out of high school before graduation; it rose close to two years for those with a high school diploma, including those with some college education but no college degree; and then it rose another year and a half or two years for those who had completed college.

The above-average age at first marriage for urban persons with very little education suggests that many of them may have been less attractive as marriage partners—mentally, physically, economically, or culturally—than the average person who had been able to pursue his education further. The far-below-average age at first marriage for those with some high school training but no diploma suggests that fewer of them may have lacked the types of attractiveness just mentioned but that many of them may have had aspiration levels below average, both in connection with educational advancement and in preparation for marriage. (The average young adult in the 1950's had graduated from high school.)

TABLE 75.—MEDIAN AGE AT FIRST MARRIAGE AND REMARRIAGE, BY YEARS OF SCHOOL COM-
PLETED AND SEX, FOR PERSONS WITH MARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE,
FOR URBAN AREAS: JUNE 1954

Years of school completed	Median age at first marriage		Median age at remarriage	
	Men	Women	Men	Women
Urban, total..........................	24.5	21.2	39.7	33.6
Elementary: 0 to 7 years...............	25.8	21.8	45.0	37.3
8 years.....................	25.5	21.5	43.5	37.5
High school: 1 to 3 years...............	22.8	19.4	37.2	31.1
4 years....................	24.3	21.1	35.5	32.8
College: · 1 to 3 years...............	24.7	21.8	39.8	33.6
4 or more.................	26.1	23.9		

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, table 27.
Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

The progressively higher median ages at first marriage for persons with 12 or more years of schooling is only partly explainable by the longer amount of time spent in school. Even among those who drop out of high school, the median age at marriage is well above the usual age for completing 1 to 3 years of high school. In fact, the waiting period between quitting school and marriage appears to diminish as the amount of schooling increases, for those with 9 or more years of school. There is only about one-half year difference, however, between the median age at marriage for those who quit after high school graduation and those with 1 to 3 years of college, although the latter had been in school about a year and a half more, on the average, than the former. In this situation, and in others to be encountered later in this chapter, there is evidence of selectivity in the types of persons who do or do not pursue their schooling until they have completed a particular school level (elementary school, high school, or college). This evidence is consistent with the finding that men who finished a particular school level had much larger incomes than those who dropped out before they finished the highest level of school which they had started.[4]

The high median age at remarriage for persons with little education is very likely affected by a concentration among them of older persons who were previously widowed; small amounts of education were quite common among persons who went to school a long time ago. Moreover, persons with little education tend more often than others to remarry more than once and are probably, therefore, older at the time of the last marriage than those with more education (Chapter 7, table 99).

Among persons with recent first marriages, the education of the husband tends to be about the same as the education of the wife, but among those with recent remarriages the education of the husband tends to be a little

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[4] Paul C. Glick and Herman P. Miller, "Educational Level and Potential Income," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 21, No. 3, June 1956, pp. 307–312.

lower than that of the wife, according to the figures in table 76. A summary of the details in this table reveals the following variations:

Among 100 first marriages, on the average, in
45 the husbands and wives were in the same broad educational level; in
28 the wives were in a higher educational level; and in
27 the husbands were in a higher educational level.

Among 100 remarriages, on the average, in
41 the husbands and wives were in the same broad educational level; in
33 the wives were in a higher educational level; and in
26 the husbands were in a higher educational level.

TABLE 76.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF COUPLES WITH MARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE, BY YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY HUSBAND AND WIFE: JUNE 1954

[Percent not shown where less than 0.1; median not shown where base is less than 200,000]

| Years of school completed by husband in first marriage or remarriage	All recently married couples	Years of school completed by wife						Median school years completed
		Elementary		High school		College		
		0 to 7 years	8 years	1 to 3 years	4 years	1 to 3 years	4 or more	
First marriage..........	100.0	7.0	9.6	24.3	43.2	9.1	6.8	12.2
Elementary: 0 to 7 years...	9.8	3.8	1.7	3.1	1.0	0.1	0.1	8.6
8 years........	12.4	1.4	4.0	3.8	2.8	0.3	...	9.6
High school: 1 to 3 years...	23.6	1.3	2.2	9.2	9.9	0.8	0.1	11.7
4 years........	33.0	0.4	1.4	6.4	21.2	2.7	1.0	12.4
College: 1 to 3 years...	10.0	0.1	0.1	1.3	4.9	2.4	1.1	12.7
4 or more......	11.3	...	0.1	0.4	3.3	2.9	4.5	14.8
Median years completed......	12.1	6.5	8.8	10.7	12.4	13.9	16+	...
Remarriage..............	100.0	16.7	15.5	25.8	28.6	8.5	4.8	11.1
Elementary: 0 to 7 years...	21.3	10.9	3.2	5.2	1.2	0.6	0.3	6.9
8 years........	19.5	2.7	6.1	5.2	3.7	1.4	0.3	9.5
High school: 1 to 3 years...	22.8	2.0	2.9	9.3	6.8	1.2	0.6	11.1
4 years........	22.0	0.9	2.3	5.0	11.2	1.6	0.9	12.2
College: 1 to 3 years...	8.5	0.1	0.9	0.6	3.8	2.1	1.0	...
4 or more......	5.8	...	0.1	0.5	1.9	1.6	1.6	...
Median years completed......	10.2	5.4	8.8	9.8	12.2	...	...	...

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, table 10. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

There was a tendency for wives to have a little more education than their husbands where the husband had not graduated from high school, but for husbands to have a little more education than the wives where the husband had attended college. This is true for couples with husbands in remarriages as well as for those with husbands in first marriages. These patterns parallel those for individuals by sex and reflect the fact that boys in their teens are more likely than girls of the same age to drop out of elementary school or high school, whereas young men who graduate from high school are more likely than young women to go on to college. In addition, the

data are affected by the larger gap between the ages of spouses in remarriages than in first marriages; more of the remarried men were considerably older than their wives and therefore were more likely to have been of school age a longer time ago, when people tended to drop out while still in the lower grades.

Major occupation group of husband. In general, those husbands whose chosen line of work requires more than an average amount of educational training or manual or supervisory experience, or the accumulation of material resources, are likely to be older at first marriage than other men (table 77). Thus, laborers and operatives generally need little training, experience, or resources to enter their types of work and they tend to marry at younger ages than the average. Craftsmen, foremen, clerical, sales, and service workers occupy an intermediate position with respect to both background preparation for their work and age at marriage. (Service workers actually represent a relatively heterogeneous group.) Finally, professional and technical workers, proprietors, officials, managers, farm operators, and farm foremen usually require the greatest amounts of preparation and resources to carry on their work and they tend to be the oldest at first marriage. These patterns are clearly visible for men who had been married only a few years. For those with marriages contracted a longer time ago, the patterns are more obscure.

TABLE 77.—MEDIAN AGE OF HUSBAND AT FIRST MARRIAGE, BY MAJOR OCCUPATION GROUP OF HUSBAND (FOR EMPLOYED CIVILIANS), MONEY INCOME OF HUSBAND IN 1947, AND DURATION OF MARRIAGE, FOR MARRIED COUPLES WITH THE HUSBAND MARRIED ONCE: APRIL 1948

Major occupation group of husband in 1948	Median age at first marriage		Money income of husband in 1947	Median age at first marriage	
	Married less than 5 years	Married 5 years or more		Married less than 5 years	Married 5 years or more
Total employed civilians..........	24.2	24.1	Total................	23.9	24.2
Farm laborers and foremen.............	22.8	23.0	Under $1,000.............	22.7	24.5
Laborers, except farm and mine........	22.9	24.0	$1,000 to $1,999..........	22.7	24.0
Operatives and kindred workers........	23.4	23.3	$2,000 to $2,999..........	23.8	23.9
Craftsmen, foremen, and kindred wkrs..	24.0	23.6	$3,000 to $3,999..........	25.8	23.8
Clerical, sales, and kindred wkrs.....	24.6	24.7	$4,000 and over..........	26.5	25.3
Service workers, incl. private hshld..	24.8	24.7			
Profess'l, techn'l, and kindred wkrs..	25.2	25.5			
Mgrs., off'ls, and propr's,exc. farm..	25.4	24.4			
Farmers and farm managers.............	25.6	23.8			

Source: Paul C. Glick and Emanuel Landau, "Age as a Factor in Marriage," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. XV, No. 4, August 1950, p. 527, and unpublished data. Based on Current Population Survey data.

The median age at first marriage for recently married men in every occupation group is above the usual age at college graduation. This fact tends to minimize the importance of age at leaving school as a direct factor in explaining age at marriage. Certainly laborers are likely to leave school and start full-time employment more than five years before professional men, on the average, yet the median age at first marriage for laborers

is only about two years below that for professional men.[5]   Presumably
professional men are in a better position to marry soon after finishing
school than are manual laborers.   Moreover, one of the main reasons why
women are younger than men at first marriage, as a rule, is probably the
traditional practice in this country of placing the chief responsibility for
family income maintenance upon the husband.

Income of husband.   A positive correlation between income of the
husband and age at first marriage is evident from the figures in table 77
for men married less than five years.   (As a standard of comparison, the
median income in 1947 of men who had been in their first marriage less
than five years was $2,268.)   Men with incomes above the average soon
after marriage had probably, as a rule, started full-time work at relatively
high rates of pay and had risen higher on the occupational ladder before
marriage than those with incomes below average.

A variation in this pattern is suggested by the figures in the first column
of table 78.   (See also figure 22.)   Men who marry before they are 25
tend to have the lowest family incomes soon after marriage.   Those with
family incomes above the average soon after marriage most often marry
between the ages of 25 and 29 years.   The approximately 15 percent of
men who postpone marriage until they are 30 years old and over occupy
only an intermediate position with respect to family income despite their
having the most work experience.

TABLE **78.**—Median Money Income of Husband and Wife Combined in 1952, by Age of
Husband, for Couples with Marriages Between January 1950 and Survey Date:
April 1953

Age of husband in April 1953	Median income in 1952	Age of husband in April 1953	Median income in 1952
First marriages[1]...............	$3,682	Remarriages[2].....................	$3,629
Under 25 years....................	3,168	Under 30 years....................	3,251
25 to 29 years....................	4,319	30 to 44 years....................	4,268
30 years and over.................	3,966	45 years and over.................	3,189

[1] Both husband and wife married once.

[2] Either husband or wife or both remarried.

Source: Derived from National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 39, No. 5,
table 6. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

The necessary data for a more definitive analysis of the relationship
between potential income and age at first marriage are not available.   A
good approach for such an analysis would be to obtain income distribu-
tions of husbands at the peak of their earning careers (usually between 35

[5] A comparison of the high median ages at marriage for lower educational groups, as shown in table
75, with the low median ages at marriage for lower occupation groups, as shown in table 77, calls at-
tention to the need for more research on the relationship between age at marriage and economic status.
Data on age at marriage by educational level, cross-classified further by occupation group should help
to clarify the underlying relationship.

and 54 years old) classified by age at first marriage. The scant information available suggests, nonetheless, that men who delay their first marriages until they are well above the average age at marriage tend to include more than the usual proportion of men who have difficulties in making adjustments, both economic and social. This hypothesis is consistent with other data, to be discussed later, which show that men who never marry tend to occupy a comparatively low position in the economic scale.

FIGURE 22.—MEDIAN INCOME IN 1952 OF COUPLES MARRIED IN 1950 TO 1953, BY AGE OF HUSBAND IN 1953
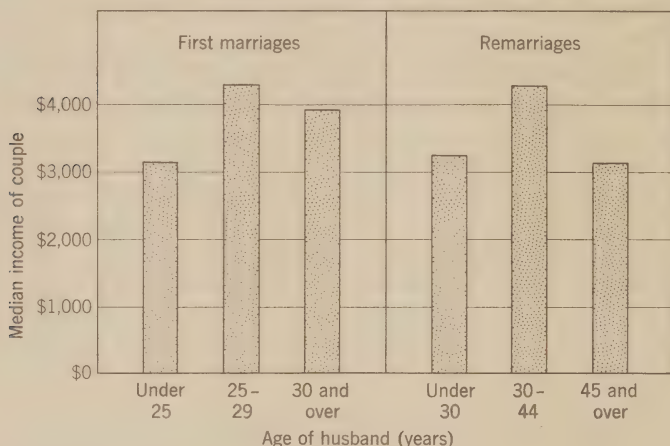
Note: Based on data in table 78.

Among couples with remarriages a short time before the survey of April 1953, those with the husband 30 to 44 years old had the highest median income. The median income of couples with the husband or wife or both remarried and with the husband 30 to 44 years old was no higher than that of couples with both the husband and wife married only once and with the husband 25 to 29 years old, even though the former included husbands who were nearer the usual period of peak earnings. This fact suggests that men with a previous marriage tend to have more unstable employment, or at least less remunerative work, than similar men with no previous marriage.

Among men whose marriages have been broken, however, those who remarry tend to have a higher economic status and related attributes than those who do not remarry. Those remarried less than five years before the date of the April 1948 survey, from which the 1947 income data were obtained, had a median income of $2,348.[6] Those who had become divorced within five years prior to the survey and had not remarried had almost an identical median income, namely, $2,346, whereas those who had become widowed in this period and had not remarried had a median

[6] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 23, table 10.

income of $1,521. If those who remarried had been a representative
cross section of those subject to remarriage, their median income would
have probably fallen somewhere between the medians for the recently
widowed and the recently divorced. Since the median income of those
who remarried was well above that level, it seems safe to infer that those
who did remarry tended to have higher incomes than those who remained
divorced or widowed. This inference is supported by the additional fact
that men who had been divorced less than five years had higher median
incomes ($2,346) than those divorced five years or more ($1,942), and
the fact that those widowed less than five years had higher median incomes
($1,521) than those widowed five to nine years ($1,352). Although
about 30 percent of the widowers had been widowed ten years or more,
probably very few of these men should be regarded as actively subject to
remarriage.

The financial standing of a recently married couple depends, of course,
not only on the husband's income but also on that of others in his family
group, especially his wife. According to 1953 data on couples in their
first marriages for three and one-quarter years or less, about half (55 per-
cent) of the wives had some income during the calendar year preceding
the survey (table 79).

TABLE 79.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF COUPLES WITH FIRST MARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY
1950 AND SURVEY DATE, BY COMBINED MONEY INCOME OF HUSBAND AND WIFE IN 1952, BY
MONEY INCOME OF WIFE IN 1952: APRIL 1953

Income of wife in 1952	All recently married couples with husband and wife married once	Combined income of husband and wife in 1952					
		Under $2,000	$2,000 to $2,999	$3,000 to $3,999	$4,000 to $4,999	$5,000 to $5,999	$6,000 and over
Total................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
None.....................	45.0	66.9	59.7	51.0	33.1	25.2	23.1
$1 to $1,999.............	34.3	33.1	39.2	40.3	41.4	31.0	12.3
$2,000 and over..........	20.7	...	1.1	8.6	25.5	43.9	64.7

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 39, No. 5, table 9.
Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

In this connection, it would be interesting to test the hypothesis that
recently married couples in the greatest financial need would be the ones
among which the largest proportion of income-earning wives are found.
To test this hypothesis, data on income of the husband by income of the
wife, for recently married couples, would be desirable. Available data
on income of the husband and wife combined cross-classified by income
of the wife, however, are consistent with the reverse of this hypothesis.
Thus, the proportion of wives with income and also the amount of the wife's
income increased progressively as the total income of the husband and
wife combined went up (table 79). At the lowest extreme, only one-third
of the wives had incomes where the combined income was below $2,000,

whereas at the upper extreme, three-fourths of the wives had incomes where the combined income was $6,000 and over. Moreover, if $2,000 or more is used as a criterion of relative economic independence, about one-fourth of the wives had relative economic independence where the combined income was between $4,000 and $5,000. This proportion was nearly one-half where the combined income was between $5,000 and $6,000, and it was about two-thirds where the combined income was $6,000 and over. According to other census data, based on 1952 income figures without regard to duration of marriage, the proportion of families with working wives rose from only about 20 percent for the lower income groups to about 40 percent for families with incomes between $6,000 and $10,000 and then dropped back to 20 percent for families in the highest income bracket ($15,000 or more).[7]

Difference between ages of husband and wife

Range and patterns of the differences. As indicated in an earlier section of this chapter, the ages of persons at the time of entering their first marriage tend to be concentrated within the span of a few years of age. The ages of heaviest concentration for men and women, both separately and jointly, are summarized in the following statement which is based on vital statistics data for 21 States in 1953.

Among couples with groom and bride entering first marriage:
54 percent of the grooms were between 20 and 24 years old,
55 percent of the brides were between 18 and 21 years old, and
36 percent of the couples had both groom and bride within these ages;
81 percent of the grooms were between 18 and 26 years old,
82 percent of the brides were between 16 and 23 years old, and
74 percent of the couples had both groom and bride within these ages.[8]

These figures indicate not only that the husbands tend to be older than their wives at first marriage but also that their ages at first marriage are somewhat less concentrated. For instance, 54 percent of the grooms were in the five single years of age, 20, 21, 22, 23, and 24, whereas virtually the same proportion (55 percent) of the brides were in the four single years of age, 18, 19, 20, and 21.

The amount by which husbands tend to be older than their wives, where both are entering their first marriage, is brought out in table 80 and figure 23. If the ages of the spouses always tended to be about the same number of years apart, regardless of the age of either at first marriage, the curves in figure 23 would have slopes of 45 degrees and would, therefore, be parallel to the central diagonal lines. Both of the curves, however, have slopes of less than 45 degrees. The slope of the top curve

[7] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-60, No. 15, page 3.
[8] National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 42, No. 5, table 3.

and the data in the left half of table 80 indicate that, on the average, women who are under 18 years of age at marriage tend to marry men who are more than three years their senior; for women 18 to 20 years old, when close to 40 percent of the women enter first marriage, the gap averages about three years; for those 21 to 25, it is about two years; and for those 26 to 31, it is only about one year, but still in the direction of the husband being older than the wife.   (Only about 5 percent of the women who marry enter first marriages after they are 31 years old.)

TABLE **80.**—MEDIAN AGE OF BRIDE AND GROOM BY AGE OF SPOUSE AT FIRST MARRIAGE OF BOTH, FOR 21 REPORTING STATES: 1953

[Medians computed from data by single years of age]

Age of bride	Median age of groom	Age of groom	Median age of bride
15 years......................	19.7	18 years......................	18.1
16 years......................	20.1	19 years......................	18.5
17 years......................	20.6	20 years......................	19.0
18 years......................	21.3	21 years......................	19.4
19 years......................	21.9	22 years......................	20.2
20 years......................	22.7	23 years......................	20.7
21 years......................	23.3	24 years......................	21.2
22 years......................	24.2	25 years......................	21.7
23 years......................	24.9	26 years......................	22.2
24 years......................	25.7	27 years......................	22.7
25 years......................	26.6	28 years......................	23.3
26 years......................	27.4	29 years......................	23.9
27 years......................	28.3	30 years......................	24.6
28 years......................	29.1	31 years......................	25.0
29 years......................	30.0	32 years......................	26.1
30 years......................	30.8	33 years......................	26.7
31 years......................	32.0	34 years......................	27.5

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 42, No. 5, table A.   Based on vital statistics records.

The slope of the bottom curve in figure 23 and the data in the right half of table 80 show that, on the average, men who marry at the ages of 18 to 20 years tend to be about the same age as their wives or one year older; about one-third of the men enter first marriage between the ages of 21 and 23 years and these men tend to be about two years older than their wives; the gap averages about three years for men 24 or 25 years old at first marriage, four years for those 26 or 27, five years for those 28 to 30, and six years for those 31 to 34 years old at first marriage.   (Only about 5 percent of the men who marry enter first marriage after they are 34 years old.)

These findings indicate that women who are quite young at first marriage usually marry men several years older than themselves, but that women who are relatively late in entering their first marriages are likely to be about the same age as their husbands.   The data also indicate, conversely, that men who are quite young at first marriage usually marry women about their own age, but that men who are relatively late in entering their first marriages are likely to be several years older than their wives.   With reference to these data on first marriages, it might appear arithmetically impossible for young men to marry women their own age (while young women

marry older men) or for older women to marry men their own age (while older men marry younger women). The explanation is that relatively few men marry when they are very young, and relatively few women marry for the first time when they are comparatively old. These few marriages do not greatly affect the median ages of the spouses of young women and older men.

FIGURE **23.**—MEDIAN AGE OF BRIDE AND GROOM BY AGE OF SPOUSE AT FIRST MARRIAGE OF BOTH, FOR 21 REPORTING STATES: 1953
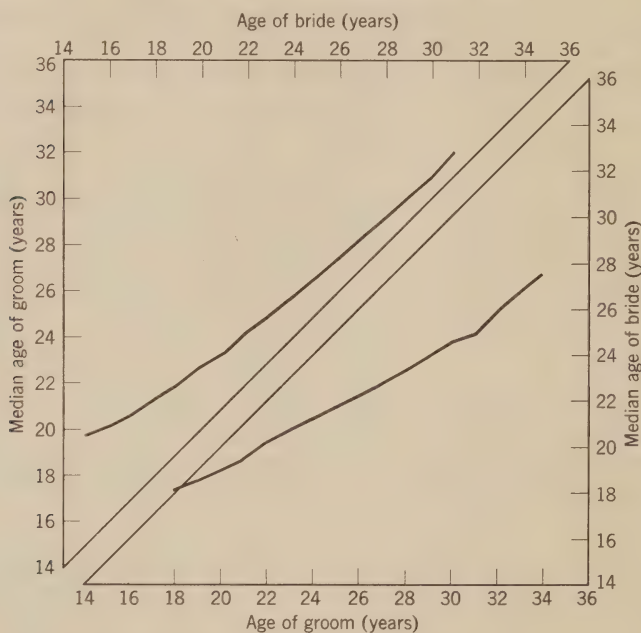
Note: Based on data in table 80.

A somewhat similar pattern for couples prevails when one or both spouses remarry, except that for a specified age of the husband or wife the median age of the spouse is a few years older (table 81). This fact reflects, in part, the general tendency for the disparity between the ages of spouses to be greater where one or both are remarrying, but this tendency is more evident from the standpoint of the wife's age than the husband's. The figures for those at the younger ages are affected by the fact that twice as large a proportion of the women as of the men are in their early 20's at the time of remarriage; the figures for those at older ages are affected by the fact that half again as large a proportion of the men as of the women are above the age of 45 years at the time of remarriage.

TABLE **81.**—MEDIAN AGE OF HUSBAND AND WIFE AT CURRENT MARRIAGE BY AGE OF SPOUSE AT CURRENT MARRIAGE, FOR COUPLES WITH HUSBAND OR WIFE OR BOTH REMARRIED BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE: JUNE 1954

Age of wife at current marriage	Median age of husband at current marriage	Age of husband at current marriage	Median age of wife at current marriage
Total, husband or wife or both remarried......................	35.8	Total, husband or wife or both remarried......................	31.1
14 to 19 years.....................	26.5	14 to 24 years.....................	23.7
20 to 24 years.....................	27.4	25 to 29 years.....................	24.2
25 to 29 years.....................	31.0	30 to 34 years.....................	28.6
30 to 34 years.....................	35.7	35 to 39 years.....................	33.1
35 to 39 years.....................	40.9	40 to 44 years.....................	35.9
40 to 49 years.....................	47.9	45 to 54 years.....................	41.8
50 years and over..................	60.4	55 years and over..................	51.4

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, table 14. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

Among couples who married between 1947 and 1954, the median difference in ages of the spouses was 3.0 years for couples with the husbands in their first marriages and twice that much, 6.1 years, for couples with the husbands remarried (table 82). In both the first marriages and the remarriages, about three-fourths of the husbands were older than their wives. Because of the smaller amount of deviation in the ages of persons at first marriage than at remarriage, about twice as large a proportion of those entering first marriages as of those entering remarriages are the same age as their spouse. Moreover, since persons who remarry are older, as a rule, than those who marry for the first time, the former tend to be in an age range where several years' difference in ages of the spouses is less conspicuous. In other words, a person who remarries generally has reason to be less sensitive about a few years' difference between his age and the age of his spouse.

TABLE **82.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AGES OF HUSBAND AND WIFE, FOR COUPLES WITH MARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE: JUNE 1954

Difference between ages of husband and wife	Husband in first marriage	Difference between ages of husband and wife	Husband re-married
Total.............................	100.0	Total.............................	100.0
Husband older than wife by--		Husband older than wife by--	
10 years or more.....................	6.1	15 years or more.....................	13.3
5 to 9 years........................	23.0	10 to 14 years.......................	16.6
3 and 4 years.......................	21.4	7 to 9 years........................	15.1
2 years.............................	13.1	5 and 6 years.......................	11.8
1 year..............................	11.1	3 and 4 years.......................	10.4
Husband and wife same age..................	10.7	1 and 2 years.......................	10.6
Husband younger than wife by--		Husband and wife same age.................	4.4
1 and 2 years.......................	8.9	Husband younger than wife.................	17.8
3 years or more.....................	5.8		
Median years husband was older than wife.	3.0	Median years husband was older than wife.	6.1

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, tables 15 and 16. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

The extremes of the range of age disparities are especially noteworthy. Thus, men who remarry are somewhat more likely than those who enter first marriage to be younger than their wives and are much more likely to be far older than their wives. Only 6 percent of the men entering their first marriages were at least ten years senior to their wives, whereas 30 percent of those remarrying were at least ten years senior to their wives.

Variations by age at marriage. A direct measurement of the differences between the ages of the spouses at marriage reveals the familiar pattern of a smaller disparity if the husband is relatively young, and of a larger disparity if the wife is relatively young (table 83). For all couples with the husband in his first marriage, the husband is three years older than the wife, on the average; for all couples with the husband in a remarriage, the husband is six years older than the wife, on the average.

TABLE 83.—MEDIAN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AGES OF HUSBAND AND WIFE AT MARRIAGE, BY AGE OF SPOUSE AT MARRIAGE, FOR COUPLES WITH MARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE: JUNE 1954

Age at first marriage	Median years husband was older than wife	Age at remarriage	Median years husband was older than wife
FIRST MARRIAGE		REMARRIAGE	
Age of Husband		Age of Husband	
Total[1]........................	3.0	Total[3]........................	6.1
14 to 29 years......................	2.8	14 to 29 years......................	3.1
14 to 19 years..................	1.3	30 years and over..................	7.2
20 and 21 years.................	2.1	30 to 34 years..................	5.1
22 to 24 years..................	3.1	35 to 39 years..................	5.7
25 to 29 years..................	4.5	40 to 44 years..................	6.9
30 years and over....................	6.4	45 years and over................	9.3
Age of Wife		Age of Wife	
Total[2]........................	3.2	Total[4]........................	5.3
14 to 29 years......................	3.3	14 to 29 years......................	7.4
14 to 19 years..................	4.0	30 years and over..................	4.6
20 and 21 years.................	3.1	30 to 44 years..................	5.2
22 to 24 years..................	2.7	45 years and over................	2.9
25 to 29 years..................	1.6		
30 years and over....................	1.1		

[1] Husband married once, wife either married once or remarried.
[2] Husband and wife married once.
[3] Husband remarried, wife either married once or remarrried.
[4] Husband and wife remarried.

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, tables 15 and 16. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

It is significant that the median difference between the ages of the spouses is actually about the same (three years) for both first marriages and remarriages where the age of the husband at marriage is under 30 years. Likewise, the median difference between the ages of the spouses is nearly the same for both types of marriage where the age of the husband at marriage is 30 years and over; here, the median gap is about six years for first marriages and seven for remarriages. Although the available

data do not permit comparisons of the disparity between the ages of the spouses according to more detailed age levels of the husbands, they nevertheless point strongly to the conclusion that, in general, a knowledge of the age of the husband at the time of marriage is a more important factor in establishing the probable age of his wife than is the knowledge as to whether he is marrying for the first time or has been previously married.[9]

This pattern does not hold true, however, when the wife's age at marriage is the point of reference. For women under 30 years old at marriage, the median difference between the ages of the spouses is about twice as large for women entering remarriage (seven years) as for those entering first marriage (three years). For women 30 years old and over at marriage, the median gap is also much higher for women entering remarriage (five years) than for those entering first marriage (one year). Thus, it appears that previous marital status, in this case, does constitute a residual factor, over and above age at which the woman married, in explaining the difference between the ages of the spouses. The fact that the findings are not the same when age of husband and age of wife are used as reference points is probably a function of differences between the distribution of the ages of men and the distribution of the ages of women at both first marriage and remarriage. This is an area where more intensive research is needed for an adequate understanding of the underlying factors.

Variations by social characteristics. The difference between the ages of spouses at first marriage and remarriage of the husband varies by color, residence, and educational level (table 84 and figure 24). In both types of marriage, the number of years by which the age of the husband exceeds that of the wife is greater for nonwhites than for whites, for farm residents than for nonfarm residents, and for persons with no high school education than for those with a high school or college education. Various measures of economic status usually show a relatively large proportion of whites, of nonfarm residents, and of persons with a high school or college education in the upper half of the economic scale.

The results in table 84, therefore, imply a negative correlation between the economic status of the husband, on the one hand, and the size of the gap between the ages of the spouses, on the other hand. This correlation may reflect, among other things, a tendency for men who come from the lower economic strata to place an unusually high premium on marrying women somewhat younger than themselves; or it may reflect a tendency for women in the lower economic strata to prefer marital partners who are considerably older than themselves because such men would have had

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[9] A similar conclusion has been reached on the basis of more detailed data for the State of Massachusetts for 1947 to 1951 and 1921 to 1925. See "Age Differences of Brides and Grooms," *Statistical Bulletin* of the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company, Vol. 35, No. 5, May 1954, pp. 1-6. This article states, in addition, that "where the groom is under age 30, the difference in age between the bride and groom is about the same as a generation ago. On the other hand, men marrying later in life now choose brides somewhat closer to their own age."

time to rise higher in the occupational scale than men nearer their own ages.

TABLE 84.—MEDIAN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AGES OF HUSBAND AND WIFE, BY COLOR. RESI-
DENCE, AND YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY HUSBAND, FOR COUPLES WITH MARRIAGES
BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE: JUNE 1954

Color and residence	Median years husband was older than wife		Years of school completed by husband	Median years husband was older than wife	
	Husband in first marriage	Husband re-married		Husband in first marriage	Husband re-married
Total..................	3.0	6.1	Total..................	3.6	6.1
White..................	3.0	6.0	Elementary: 0 to 7 years...	4.0	8.4
Nonwhite................	3.6	7.4	8 years........	3.7	6.3
			High school: 1 to 3 years...	2.9	5.3
Urban..................	2.9	6.1	4 years........	2.8	5.5
Rural nonfarm..........	3.3	5.5	College: 1 to 3 years...	2.9	
Rural farm.............	3.8	8.6	4 or more......	3.1	5.7

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, tables 15 and 16.   Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

FIGURE 24.—MEDIAN DIFFERENCE BETWEEN AGES OF HUSBAND AND WIFE, BY YEARS
OF SCHOOL COMPLETED BY HUSBAND, FOR COUPLES MARRIED IN 1947 TO 1954
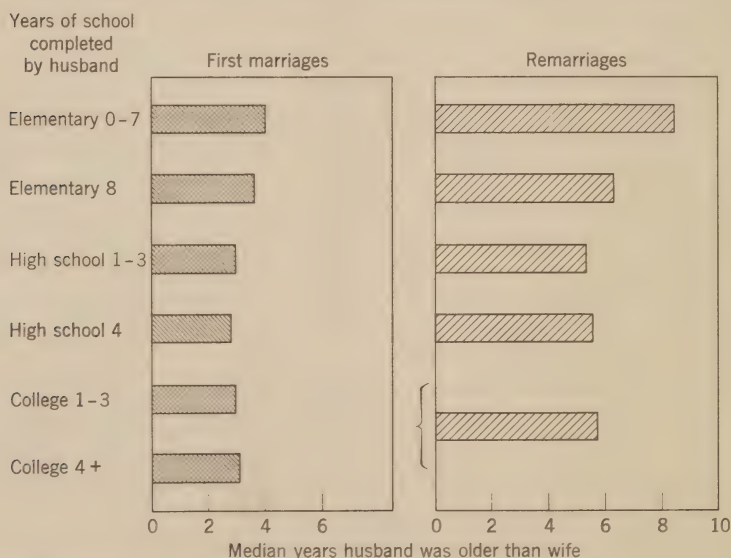
Note: Based on data in table 84.

There are many practical implications of the differences between the ages of spouses at marriage. Among these are the effects of these differences on the probability of survival of the husband and wife and, in turn, the effects on the chance that orphaned children will be dependent on a surviving widow or widower. The fact that men are usually older than their wives and subject to higher death rates indicates that, as a rule, the

husband is more likely than the wife to die before their children reach maturity, in which case the children become dependent upon her for support. If the husband is considerably older than his wife, not only is this likelihood increased, but also the chances of divorce are probably greater, although evidence on the latter point is not available from census data.

The period of joint survival of the marital partners is likely to be greatest where the husband is about five years younger than the wife. When the disparity between the ages of the spouses is great, however, this disparity may become a source of social derision and therefore a potential threat to the stability of the marriage. In any case, the interests of spouses are probably most nearly mutual, as a rule, when the husband and wife are about the same age.

CHAPTER 7

MARRIAGE RATES AND NUMBER OF PREVIOUS MARRIAGES

Trend and patterns of marriage rates

A proper evaluation of the trend and varied patterns among first marriages can be obtained most effectively by examining first marriage rates. There are similar advantages in studying divorce, separation, widowhood, and remarriage rates. Such rates may be computed in many different ways, but the most useful way is to relate the number of marriages (divorces, etc.) to the number of persons who are subject to marriage (divorce, etc.) during the time interval in question.

The number of persons subject to first marriage (that is, the number of single persons) is ordinarily smaller for each successively older age group of adults. Obviously the number of single persons diminishes most rapidly at those ages when the number of marriages is the largest. Among single persons past the age at which most first marriages occur, both the number of marriages and the number of persons still subject to marriage go down as age advances. If first marriage rates are calculated on the basis of the number of persons still subject to first marriage, it takes fewer first marriages at successively older ages to yield a first marriage rate of a given level. In actual practice, the size of the first marriage rate goes down more slowly after the peak period of first marriage, percentagewise, than does the number of first marriages.

Trend of first marriage rates. The relative magnitudes of first marriage rates just prior to the time of the 1950 Census, as compared with those just prior to the 1940 and 1910 Censuses, are shown in table 85 for women by color, with rates by age for white women.[1] Since these rates were estimated on the basis of data that required some adjustments, they are probably more useful for showing patterns of change over time and by age than they are for indicating the absolute levels of the rates.

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[1] These rates represent probabilities of marriage within one year's time and were derived from census data on women reported as having entered their first marriages during the three years prior to the respective census dates and from census data on the number of single women. The base used for the rates was the number of single females at the census date plus one-third of those in their first marriages less than three years before the date of the census; that is, the base was the estimated number of women who had been single at some time during the year before the census and therefore subject to first marriage. No allowance was made for deaths, divorces, immigration, or emigration of persons subject to first marriage during the period, nor for errors in the reporting of marital items. Although the

TABLE **85.**—FIRST MARRIAGE RATES PER 1,000 WOMEN SUBJECT TO FIRST MARRIAGE, BY COLOR, WITH RATES FOR WHITE WOMEN BY AGE: 1947 TO 1950, 1937 TO 1940, AND 1907 TO 1910

[Rates are averages for the three years preceding the dates of the 1950, 1940, and 1910 Censuses and are subject to errors of estimate. See text, footnote 1]

Age and color	1947 to 1950	1937 to 1940	1907 to 1910
Women 15 years old and over.......	85	55	60
White................................	86	54	58
15 to 19 years.....................	81	48	47
20 to 24 years.....................	172	105	94
25 to 29 years.....................	130	86	82
30 to 34 years.....................	72	46	60
35 years and over..................	14	8	12
Nonwhite.............................	77	61	76

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 102; Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 5, Chapter C, Fertility, tables 18 and 19; *1940 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Characteristics by Age*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, table 8; *Fertility by Duration of Marriage*, tables 1 to 4; *Nativity and Parentage of the White Population*, General Characteristics, table 16; and *1910 Census of Population*, Vol. I, *General Report and Analysis*, Chapter V, Marital Condition, table 16.

Before 1940, the first marriage rate for nonwhite women was evidently somewhat higher than that for white women but by 1950 the reverse was true.   For both white and nonwhite women, the first marriage rate was lower during the late 1930's than during the years immediately before 1910.   For white women, the decline appears to have been limited to those above the age of 30 years and presumably reflects the postponement of marriages during the 1930's among women who were in their 20's or

levels of the rates would have been somewhat different if such allowances had been made, it is believed that the general conclusions about trends and differentials would not have been greatly affected thereby.

The data on recently married women by age at census date were adjusted to the age at marriage. For 1940 and 1910, three types of additional adjustments were made: (1) data on duration of marriage for native white women were inflated to cover also foreign-born white women, on the assumption that the first marriage rates for native whites and foreign-born whites were the same in each age group, and data for Negroes were inflated in a similar manner to cover also other nonwhite women; (2) women with nonreports on number of times married were distributed proportionately among those in first marriages and remarriages; and (3) women with nonreports on duration of marriage were distributed proportionately among those married less than three years and those married three years or more.   For 1950, data were available on duration of marriage by color and the nonreports were distributed in the processing stages before final tabulation.   In other tables in this chapter and in Chapter 8, marriage, separation, divorce, and widowhood rates for 1948 to 1950 were calculated by the same type of method as that described here for first marriages.

The rates are based on experience for short periods of time before the decennial censuses and therefore reflect the level of marriage rates for those periods rather than for entire decades; the number of persons subject to marriage in a given period, however, depends partly upon marriage rates in preceding years and on past trends in the number of births.   In some respects "generation first marriage rates," covering the lifetime first marriage experience of cohorts, would be more useful but are not available; moreover, it is necessary to wait for many years after the peak period of first marriage before the necessary data for computing generation rates based on a given cohort become available in final form, or to make estimates of the number of first marriages for the cohort during the remainder of life.   The same problems, in perhaps aggravated form, hinder the preparation of generation remarriage rates or generation total marriage rates.   A rough measure of generation trends in first marriage can be obtained by analyzing changes in percent single for successive birth cohorts that attain age 45 or 55.   The word "cohort" is used here to mean a group of persons born in a specific period, such as 1920 or 1920 to 1924; this group of persons is studied at successive periods throughout its lifetime.

older when the depression period was at its worst. By the late 1940's, the first marriage rate for nonwhite women had regained its 1910 level whereas that for white women had gone one-third above its 1910 level. Moreover, the white first marriage rate for each age group was at least half again as high in the late 1940's as in the late 1930's. Thus, all age groups of white women shared in the first marriage boom of the 1940's. However, the increases in the rates were higher among women under 25 years old than they were for those 25 to 34 years old; this fact, in turn, helps to account for the decline in median age at first marriage.

TABLE **86.**—FIRST MARRIAGE RATES PER 1,000 PERSONS SUBJECT TO FIRST MARRIAGE, BY AGE AND SEX: 1950 TO 1953, AND 1947 TO 1950

Age	First marriage rate			Age	First marriage rate		
	CPS, 1950 to 1953	Census, 1947 to 1950	Differ- ence[1]		CPS, 1950 to 1953	Census, 1947 to 1950	Differ- ence[1]
Men 14 to 64 years...	70	64	6	Women 14 to 59 years..	91	83	8
14 to 19 years............	22	21	1	14 to 16 years............	30	31	-1
20 and 21 years..........	131	99	32	17 years.................	90	88	2
22 years..................	169	128	41	18 years.................	148	119	29
23 and 24 years..........	199	142	57	19 years.................	176	144	32
25 to 29 years...........	151	138	13	20 years.................	182	162	20
30 to 34 years...........	91	95	-4	21 years.................	184	166	18
35 to 64 years...........	24	35	-11	22 years.................	193	154	39
				23 and 24 years..........	166	149	17
				25 to 29 years...........	122	116	6
				30 to 34 years...........	72	64	8
				35 to 59 years...........	23	21	2

[1] Amount by which rate based on Current Population Survey data for 1950 to 1953 exceeded rate based on census data for 1947 to 1950; minus sign (—) denotes amount by which the former was exceeded by the latter.

Source: Derived from National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 39, No. 3, table 5; and U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 50, table 1; No. 44, table 1; No. 38, table 5; and No. 33, table 1; *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter D, Marital Status, tables 1 and 5; and Chapter E, Duration of Current Marital Status, table 3.

First marriage rates advanced to still higher levels during the early 1950's than they had attained by the late 1940's (table 86). Here, again, caution in interpreting the figures is warranted because the rates come from different sources. The rates for the early 1950's were undoubtedly affected by the expansion of the Armed Forces soon after the 1950 Census was taken. The expansion of the Armed Forces probably accounts for about four-tenths of the increase in first marriage rate for men 20 to 24 years of age, which is based on the civilian population.[2] Most of the increase in the first marriage rate between 1950 and 1953 took place among men 20 to 24 years old and among women 18 to 22 years old. The fact that the change in first marriage rate among those at still younger ages was

[2] This is the amount by which the increase in the rate for men in these ages exceeded the increase in the rate for women 18 to 22 years of age. The increase was greater for men because most of the additions to the Armed Forces were single men, who were not covered by the 1953 survey; presumably most of the men who married between 1950 and 1953 were not taken into the Armed Forces and were therefore covered by the survey, as were also virtually all recently married women.

very slight merits special attention; it will be interesting to see whether future data will show that the early 1950's represented a turning point toward declining marriage rates at these young ages. Likewise noteworthy is the decline in first marriage rates among men over 30. Evidently the high marriage rates during the 1940's and early 1950's had sharply reduced the number of bachelors with an active interest in marriage.

Differential rates of first marriage. In the late 1940's, first marriage rates for nonwhite women were lower than those for all women without regard to color and were therefore lower than those for white women, as indicated by the findings in table 87 and figure 25. For women under 18, the rates differed little; and, for women 30 and over, the rates for nonwhites appear to be higher than those for whites. However, for women between 18 and 29 years of age, when most first marriages occur, the first marriage rates for nonwhites were clearly the lower.[3]

TABLE 87.—FIRST MARRIAGE RATES PER 1,000 WOMEN SUBJECT TO FIRST MARRIAGE, BY AGE, YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED, LABOR FORCE STATUS IN 1950, AND COLOR: 1948 TO 1950

Age	First marriage rate		Years of school completed and labor force status in 1950	First marriage rate			
				Unstandardized		Standardized for age	
	Total	Non-white		Total	Non-white	Total	Non-white
Women 14 to 59 years..	70	60	Women 14 to 59 years...	70	60	70	58
14 to 17 years............	36	37	Elementary: 0 to 8 years..	50	54	73	62
18 and 19 years...........	111	85	High school: 1 to 3 years..	57	59	73	60
20 and 21 years...........	138	90	4 years.......	111	88	73	60
22 to 24 years............	127	89	College: 1 to 3 years..	78	70	58	58
25 to 29 years............	101	87	4 or more.....	66	61	55	54
30 to 34 years............	56	68					
35 to 59 years............	20	28	Labor force[1]...............	55	49	56	46
			Not in labor force.........	82	65	112	74

[1] Refers to labor force participation at time of 1950 Census, not at time of marriage.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter E, Duration of Current Marital Status, table 5; and Part 5, Chapter B, Education, table 8.

The highest first marriage rates by educational level, not standardized by age, are for women with exactly four years of high school. Corresponding rates standardized for age show little variation among women with elementary or high school training but show relatively low rates for those who had at least some college education. College-trained women probably include the largest proportion in types of employment where marriage, and especially child care, might be an impediment to occupational pursuits and advancement. Although the age-standardized first marriage rates for nonwhites below the college level are consistently lower than those for all women at this level, the corresponding rates for nonwhites

[3] The first marriage rates shown in tables 85, 86, and 87 for periods immediately preceding the 1950 Census differ in level, because the rates in tables 85 and 86 are for 1947 to 1950 whereas those in table 87 are for 1948 to 1950, and because all three sets of rates were based on data from different sources. The rates in table 87 are probably affected the most by underreporting of recent marriages, for which no corrections were made.

at the college level are practically the same as those for all women at this level. Thus, color differences in the rates for all educational groups combined result from color differences in the rates at the elementary and high school levels. These facts indicate a closer correspondence between the marriage patterns of white and nonwhite college-trained women than between those of other white and nonwhite women.

FIGURE 25.—FIRST MARRIAGE RATES FOR WOMEN 14 TO 59 YEARS OLD, BY YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED AND COLOR: 1948 TO 1950
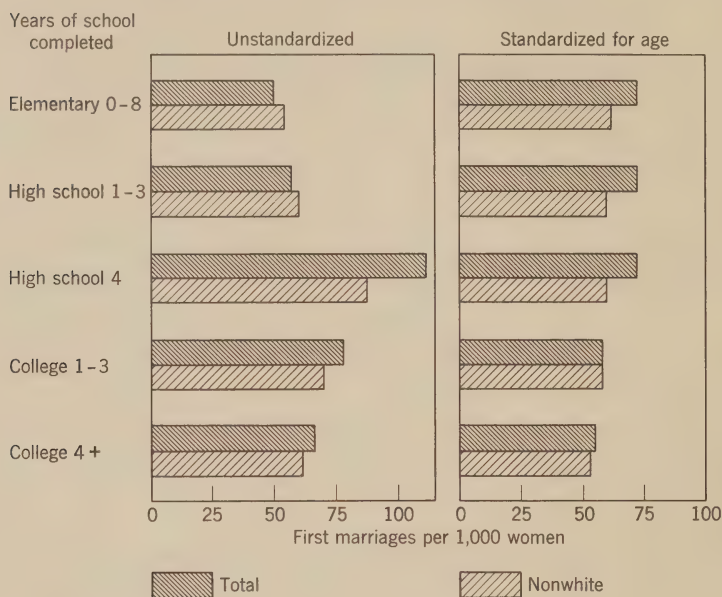
Note: Based on data in table 87.

Women not in the labor force in 1950 had twice as high a first marriage rate during the two preceding years as those in the labor force, according to data standardized for age. The rate for nonwhite women not in the labor force was half again as high as that for nonwhite women in the labor force. These striking differences are undoubtedly affected by the fact that the marriage experience covered the period from April 1948 to April 1950, whereas the labor force classification applied to the week before the 1950 Census. Obviously, it would be helpful to have data on employment status just prior to marriage. Many women who had been in the labor force immediately before marriage had dropped out of the labor force a year or two later for one reason or another, especially to have children. However, probably most of the women who worked outside the home after marriage had worked outside the home before marriage. The tendency for women not in the labor force to have higher first marriage rates is consistent with the hypothesis that young women who drop out of

school to seek employment are likely to remain single longer if they succeed in keeping themselves gainfully employed.

For men, there is a very close positive correlation between annual income and first marriage rate (table 88).[4] Thus, as a general rule, men are much more likely to enter first marriage if their incomes are relatively high than they are if their incomes are relatively low, even after differences in age are taken into account.

TABLE **88.**—MARRIAGE RATES PER 1,000 MEN 18 TO 64 YEARS OLD SUBJECT TO MARRIAGE, BY ANNUAL INCOME: 1949 TO 1952

Annual income[1]	First marriage rate[2]	Remarriage rate[2]
Men 18 to 64 years old..............	81	101
Under $2,000...............................	33	59
$2,000 to $2,999...........................	82	60
$3,000 to $3,999...........................	482	130
$4,000 and over............................	839	491

[1] The income distribution for 1952 used in the numerator was for men with marriages between January 1950 and April 1953; in the denominator, the same income distribution was used for those with first marriages in the period stated, and the income distribution for 1949 was used for single men.

[2] Standardized for age.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter D, Marital Status, table 6; and National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 39, No. 5, table 5 (based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census).

Differential rates of remarriage.   A high positive correlation was also found between income and remarriage rates.   Men who were subject to remarriage in the early 1950's were far more likely to remarry if they had incomes above $3,000, than if they had incomes below that level (table 88).

Sharp differences in marriage rates by marital status are shown in table 89.   Age for age, marriage rates in the early 1950's were highest for divorced persons, intermediate for widowed persons, and lowest for single persons.   The high remarriage rates for divorced persons tend to support the thesis that, although our society has been characterized by high divorce rates for many decades, this fact in itself does not mean our society is unstable.[5]   Perhaps divorce is generally less a repudiation of marriage than an expression of dissatisfaction with a particular marriage partner.

The moderate remarriage rates of widowed persons who had not gone far into middle age imply that a substantial proportion of these persons

[4] Here, again, the income reported does not reflect earnings at the time of marriage or anticipated earnings for the year after marriage, as would be desired; in general, it is the total amount of income receipts for a 12-month period ranging from about a year prior to marriage to a year or two after marriage. (See footnote 1 in table 88.)   If data on income for the year prior to marriage had been uniformly available, the effect would have probably been to reduce the marriage rates for those with larger incomes.   Since these rates are so extremely high, however, it is quite likely that the positive relationship between income and first marriage rate would have still persisted if more appropriate data had been used.

[5] This type of conclusion was presented by William F. Ogburn and M. F. Nimkoff in *Technology and the Changing Family*, Houghton Mifflin Co., New York, 1955, p. 227.

also had a strong preference for the married way of life. However, there are still many widowed and divorced persons, as well as many single persons, who choose to remain unmarried; some of these persons would actually prefer to be married but either fail to find a suitable marital partner or face other obstacles to marriage, such as loss of financial benefits or property.

TABLE **89.**—MARRIAGE RATES PER 1,000 PERSONS 14 YEARS OLD AND OVER SUBJECT TO MARRIAGE, BY MARITAL STATUS, AGE, AND SEX: 1950 TO 1953

[Rate not shown where base is less than 200,000]

Age	Men				Women			
	First marriage rate	Remarriage rates			First marriage rate	Remarriage rates		
		Total	Di-vorced	Wid-owed		Total	Di-vorced	Wid-owed
Total¹................	68	199	186	23	86	34	147	12
14 to 17 years............	6	...	...	...	44	...	...	...
18 and 19 years..........	61	...	...	...	161	...	...	...
20 to 24 years...........	160	...	...	...	180	313	340	...
25 to 29 years...........	151	325	341	...	122	242	264	182
30 to 34 years...........	91	246	269	...	72	132	146	104
35 to 44 years...........	35	196	244	88	42	77	114	47
45 to 54 years...........	20	89	99	79	7	27	59	19
55 to 64 years...........	9	43	69	36	2	5	40	5
65 and over.............	4	9	23	8	1	2	...	2

¹ These rates constitute revisions of those presented by Hugh Carter, Paul C. Glick, and Sarah Lewit in "Some Demographic Characteristics of Recently Married Persons: Comparisons of Registration Data and Sample Survey Data," *American Sociological Review,* Vol. 20, No. 2, April 1955, pp. 170–172. The revision consisted of expanding the base to include those who married in the period; the original rates were based only on those subject to marriage who were still unmarried at the end of the period. As in other rate tables shown in this study, the rates represent probabilities of marriage within one year's time. (See text, footnote 1.) The marriage rates for divorced persons are probably somewhat too high because of the underreporting of divorced persons.

Source: Derived from National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports,* Vol. 39, No. 3, table 5 (based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census); and U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports,* Series P–20, No. 50, table 1; No. 44, table 1; No. 38, table 5; and No. 33, table 1.

The comparatively low marriage rates for single persons in the middle and upper ages may stem partly from the relatively early marriage of those who are more prone to marry and partly from an increasing entrenchment of single persons in their life adjustments as age advances.

Divorced and widowed men had higher remarriage rates than divorced and widowed women, according to the reported figures; however, a part of the difference for divorced persons is probably attributable to higher underreporting of divorced men. (See footnote 7.)

Remarriage rates were higher for white women than for nonwhite women during the late 1940's among widowed and divorced women in each age group under 55 years old (table 90). (Widowed and divorced women in this age range may be considered actively subject to remarriage.) In addition, women who had continued their education into high school or college had higher remarriage rates than those who had never gone to high school.

TABLE **90.**—REMARRIAGE RATES PER 1,000 WOMEN 15 TO 54 YEARS OLD WHO WERE SUB-
JECT TO REMARRIAGE, BY AGE, YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED, LABOR FORCE STATUS IN
1950, AND COLOR: 1948 TO 1950

Age	Remarriage rate		Years of school completed and labor force status in 1950	Remarriage rate[1]	
	Total	Non-white		Total	Non-white
Total...................	75	63	Total...................	75	64
15 to 19 years...............	478	426	Elementary: 0 to 8 years....	71	65
20 to 24 years...............	272	240	High school: 1 to 3 years....	81	65
25 to 29 years...............	164	145	4 years.........	79	66
30 to 34 years...............	110	74	College: 1 to 3 years....	78	84
35 to 44 years...............	61	51	4 years or more.	81	63
45 to 54 years...............	20	19			
			Labor force[2]..................	45	44
			Not in labor force...........	126	91

[1] Standardized for age.

[2] Refers to labor force participation at time of 1950 Census, not at time of remarriage.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter E, Duration of Current Marital Status, table 9, and Part 5, Chapter B, Education, table 8.

As with first marriage rates, remarriage rates were far higher for women not in the labor force than for those in the labor force.[6] Since remarriage rates are highest among women of childrearing age, it might be hypothesized that many of those not in the labor force had young children and felt some urgency to remarry because they were unable to support themselves and the children. On the other hand, a woman with several children, who presumably is most in need of a partner to share the support and care of them, might well be a poorer prospect for remarriage than a woman with fewer children or none.

Remarriage rates for women according to the number of children they had ever borne throw some light on this aspect of remarriage (table 91 and figure 26). Whether women with children or without are more likely to remarry, however, evidently is, to a large extent, associated with their age. The rates that are not standardized for age strongly support the hypothesis that there is a negative correlation between number of children ever born and the rate of remarriage; this correlation holds for nonwhite women as well as for all women. · The negative correlation persists for nonwhite women when the data are standardized for age at remarriage, though the amount of variation is reduced. For white and nonwhite women combined, the remarriage rates for almost every age group were lowest for women with one or two children and the age-standardized remarriage rates, therefore, show the same pattern. Thus, when account has been taken of the fact that the number of children ever born tends to increase with age of the woman, the remarriage rates for women with one or two children were slightly lower than those for other women. It is possible, of course, that a more uniform relationship between these factors

[6] It is relevant to call attention here also to the fact that the data on labor force participation relate to the census period rather than the time of marriage. See the comments made on this point on page 134.

does exist but is obscured by factors other than age that have not been taken into account. For instance, the number of children still living with their mother would have been more relevant than the number of children ever born, but only the latter was available from the tabulations that were made.

TABLE **91.**—REMARRIAGE RATES PER 1,000 WOMEN 15 TO 54 YEARS OLD WHO WERE SUBJECT TO REMARRIAGE, BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN AND COLOR: 1948 TO 1950

Number of children ever born	Unstandardized remarriage rate		Standardized remarriage rate[1]	
	Total	Nonwhite	Total	Nonwhite
Total....................	79	65	79	65
No children.................	102	80	84	73
1 or 2 children.............	83	72	76	65
3 children or more..........	53	43	81	58

[1] Standardized for age.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population,* Vol. IV, *Special Reports,* Part 2, Chapter E, Duration of Current Marital Status, table 8, and unpublished 1950 Census data on fertility.

FIGURE **26.**—REMARRIAGE RATES FOR WOMEN 15 TO 54 YEARS OLD, BY NUMBER OF CHILDREN EVER BORN AND COLOR: 1948 TO 1950
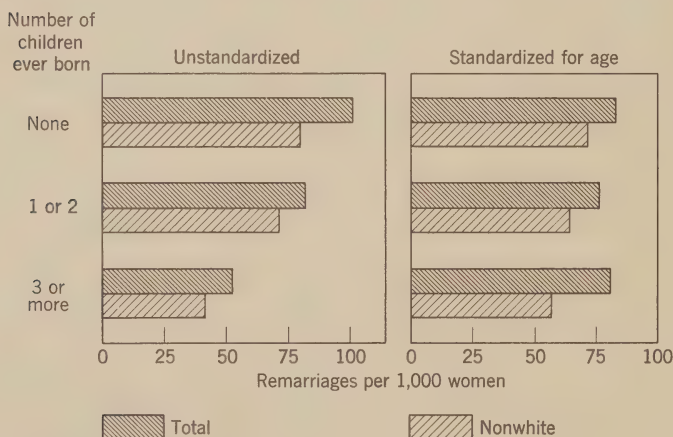
Note: Based on data in table 91.

Among those who remarried during the early 1950's, the median length of time which had elapsed since their previous marriage had been dissolved was 2.7 years for those who had been divorced and 3.5 years for those who had been widowed (table 92). There was no difference between the medians for men and women. The most frequently reported periods between divorce or widowhood and remarriage, the second and third years, accounted for more than 40 percent of the persons who remarried. The frequencies tended to diminish for successively longer intervals of divorce or widowhood.

Table **92.**—Percent Distribution of Married Persons with Remarriages Between January 1950 and Survey Date, by Duration of Previous Marital Status: April 1953

Duration of divorce before remarriage	Percent	Duration of widowhood before remarriage	Percent
Total remarried who were previously divorced[1]............................	100.0	Total remarried who were previously widowed[2]............................	100.0
Less than 1 year........................	12.1	Less than 1 year........................	3.9
1 year.................................	24.1	1 year.................................	19.4
2 years................................	20.0	2 years................................	22.0
3 years................................	12.4	3 years................................	9.1
4 years................................	8.6	4 years................................	6.5
5 years................................	5.6	5 years................................	9.5
6 years................................	2.6	6 years................................	6.0
7 years[3].............................	2.2	7 years[3].............................	4.1
8 years[3].............................	2.0	8 years[3].............................	3.0
9 years[3].............................	1.8	9 years[3].............................	2.0
10 years or more.......................	8.6	10 years or more.......................	14.7
Median years divorced before remarriage.	2.7	Median years widowed before remarriage..	3.5

[1] Based on sample figures showing 1,210,000 previously divorced persons with reports on years divorced.
[2] Based on sample figures showing 464,000 previously widowed persons with reports on years widowed.
[3] Single years estimated from grouped data.

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 39, No. 3, table 4. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

An analysis of vital statistics data on number of divorces in the early 1950's and census data on previous marital status of persons with remarriages during the same period suggests that, under current conditions, about one-half of the divorced women remarry within five years after they have obtained a divorce and that about two-thirds of the women who obtain a divorce will eventually remarry. The fact that remarriage rates for men are higher than those for women suggests, furthermore, that close to three-fourths of the men who obtain a divorce eventually remarry.[7] Although the required data are not available to make a very satisfactory estimate of the proportion of widowed persons who eventually remarry, it

[7] Data for England and Wales have likewise led to the conclusion that "about two-thirds to three-quarters of persons obtaining a divorce will ultimately re-marry." See *The Registrar General's Statistical Review of England and Wales for the Five Years, 1946–1950*, London, Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1954, p. 68. In the present study, the conclusions rest largely on remarriage experience for the period 1950 to 1953. In an earlier article by the present author, "First Marriages and Remarriages," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. XIV, No. 6, December 1949, p. 730, a somewhat higher proportion (six-sevenths remarry before 15 years of divorce) was reported on the basis of less adequate data. Some of the key figures used in the earlier analysis were based on information collected in 1948 and were, therefore, heavily weighted by the unusually large volume of divorces and remarriages during and after World War II. In neither the earlier study nor the present one was any attempt made to take into account the possible effects of errors in reporting previous marital status of recently remarried persons. There is reason to believe that these errors are far smaller than those in the reporting of current marital status. A careful study by Jacobson indicates that underenumeration of divorced persons and misreporting of divorced persons in another current marital status category in censuses and surveys may have been quite serious in 1910, but has evidently been less serious in more recent censuses. See Paul H. Jacobson, *Some Statistical Patterns of Marriage in the United States*, Ph. D. thesis, Columbia University, 1952, pp. 11–16. The tendency to misreport divorced persons in another marital status category undoubtedly arises from social disapproval of divorce; such disapproval has been waning for several decades. Divorced persons may be more likely to be missed in a census than other persons, in part, because a larger proportion of them live in transient quarters which present special difficulties in enumeration; even those in such quarters who are enumerated (especially men) are more likely to have the wrong marital status reported by the person who provides the information for them.

is likely that this proportion is less than one-half; moreover, the proportion is probably only half as high for women as for men.

About two-thirds of the remarriages of divorced and widowed persons occur among those above 30 years old, whereas three-fourths of the marriages of single persons occur among those under 25 years old. Thus, the higher marriage rates of divorced and widowed persons than of single persons of similar age relate mainly to ages above those when marriage rates of single persons are at their peak (table 89). This situation provides at least a partial explanation of the fact that the proportions of divorced and widowed persons who never remarry are far above the proportion of single persons who never marry (7 or 8 percent).

Half of those obtaining a divorce (or an annulment) in 1953 did so during the first six years of marriage, according to data from vital statistics records for 22 States (table 93).[8] Divorces were most likely to occur during the second or third year of marriage; about one-fifth of all divorces occurred during this two-year period. The proportion of divorces which occurred after longer marriage durations tended to decline gradually thereafter, with no apparent resurgence of the propensity toward divorce at any later period.[9] About 55 percent of the couples obtaining a divorce in the 22 States had no children.[10] Furthermore, one-third reported that they had one or more prior marriages, but the data did not indicate how the prior marriage or marriages had been dissolved. Some survey data on this subject will be discussed in the following section.

TABLE **93**.—Percent Distribution of Divorces and Annulments, by Duration of Marriage, for 22 Reporting States: 1953

Duration of marriage by five-year intervals	Percent[1]	Duration of marriage by single-year intervals	Percent[1]	Duration of marriage by single-year intervals	Percent[1]
Total..............	100.0	Total..............	100.0	10 years...............	2.9
				11 years...............	3.0
Less than 5 years......	41.5	Less than 1 year.......	6.8	12 years...............	2.6
5 to 9 years...........	26.4	1 year.................	10.0	13 years...............	2.2
10 to 14 years.........	12.6	2 years................	9.7	14 years...............	1.9
15 to 19 years.........	7.5	3 years................	8.0	15 years...............	1.6
20 to 24 years.........	4.5	4 years................	7.1	16 years...............	1.7
25 to 29 years.........	3.1	5 years................	6.9	17 years...............	1.6
30 to 34 years.........	1.5	6 years................	6.6	18 years and over......	13.1
35 to 39 years.........	0.7	7 years................	6.0	Not reported...........	1.5
40 years and over......	0.5	8 years................	3.9	Median duration........	6.1
Not reported...........	1.5	9 years................	3.0		

[1] The number of annulments was quite small (about 3 percent of the total).

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 42, No. 2, table 5. Based on vital statistics records.

[8] Annulments account for only about 3 percent of the total of divorces and annulments in the United States as a whole; two-thirds of the annulments occur in California and New York.

[9] It remains possible that data on divorces by ages of the children would show some increase in divorce when the youngest child reaches maturity. Such data are not shown in the reports of the National Office of Vital Statistics.

[10] Whether or not childlessness is more common among divorced persons than among married persons with the same duration of marriage and other characteristics is unknown. See Thomas P. Monahan, "Is Childlessness Related to Family Stability?" *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 20, No. 4, August 1955, p. 455.

Number of previous marriages

Since the great majority of marriages are first marriages, it is generally sufficient to discuss marital behavior in terms of a simple dichotomy of first marriages and remarriages. However, there is some interest in an analysis of the so-called "repeaters," that is, persons who have had two or more divorces, and of persons who have been widowed more than once or who have been both widowed and divorced. Data on the specific number of previous marriages are probably subject to a larger percentage of error than almost any other aspect of marriage statistics, but it is believed that the differential patterns of multiple marriages by color, age, and other characteristics deserve at least some attention.

Color differences. Among white persons who married between 1947 and 1954 and who were living with their spouses at the end of this period, four out of every five had married only once (table 94). Since these persons had been married between three and four years on the average, a majority of them had already passed through the period when the chances of divorce are the greatest (table 93). In three out of every four of these marriages, both the husband and the wife had married only once. About half of those marrying for the second time had a marital partner who was also marrying for the second time; most of the remaining persons who were entering their second marriages had marital partners who were entering their first marriages. Only about 2 percent of the white persons were getting married for the third or subsequent time; about half of them married persons who were entering a second marriage.

TABLE **94.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF COUPLES WITH MARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE, BY NUMBER OF TIMES MARRIED FOR HUSBAND AND WIFE, BY COLOR: JUNE 1954

[Percent not shown where less than 0.1]

Number of times married for husband	White				Nonwhite			
	All married couples	Number of times married for wife			All married couples	Number of times married for wife		
		1 time	2 times	3 times or more		1 time	2 times	3 times or more
Total.................	100.0	80.1	17.6	2.3	100.0	75.3	21.6	3.1
1 time....................	82.0	73.7	7.8	0.5	71.3	62.7	7.3	1.1
2 times...................	16.4	6.0	9.2	1.2	22.7	10.4	11.2	1.3
3 times...................	1.4	0.3	0.6	0.5	4.8	2.1	2.8	0.2
4 times or more...........	0.2	...	...	0.1	1.1	0.2	0.2	0.7

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, table 9. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

The marriage-frequency pattern for nonwhite persons was characterized by a larger proportion entering second and higher order marriages. The data on this subject, shown in table 94, are based on a sample and are therefore subject to relatively high sampling variability for the smaller numbers. With this limitation in mind, attention is called to the finding that 3 percent of the nonwhite women and 6 percent of the nonwhite men had entered their third or subsequent marriage, as compared with only

2 percent for white men and women. Like the whites, the nonwhites entering second and later marriages were most likely to choose, for their marriage partner, someone who was entering a second marriage, though for each color group almost as many chose someone entering a first marriage.

Relation to previous marital status and age. The extent to which a man and his wife tend to have had the same marital status immediately preceding their marriage is shown in table 95 and figure 27. As would be expected, the figures show that the tendency for divorced persons to marry divorced persons and for widowed persons to marry widowed persons is substantial but that it is far less marked than that for single persons to marry single persons. It may come as a surprise, however, that there were more marriages in 1953 of a single person and a divorced person than there were marriages of two divorced persons. Moreover, there were more marriages of a divorced person and a widowed person than there were marriages of two widowed persons. Finally, there were about the same number of marriages of a single person and a widowed person as there were marriages of two widowed persons.

TABLE **95.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF MARRIAGES BY PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS OF BRIDE AND GROOM, FOR 20 REPORTING STATES: 1953

Previous marital status of groom	Total marriages	Previous marital status of bride			
		Single	Divorced	Widowed	Not reported
Total......................	100.0	74.4	16.0	6.7	2.9
Single...........................	75.4	67.0	6.5	1.8	0.1
Divorced........................	15.8	5.8	7.7	2.0	0.2
Widowed.........................	5.9	1.4	1.6	2.8	0.1
Not reported....................	2.9	0.1	0.2	0.1	2.4

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 42, No. 5, table 8. Based on vital statistics records.

Obviously the factor of age at remarriage enters significantly into the probability that a divorced or widowed person will be marrying another person of a given marital status. Thus, among persons between 25 and 50 years old (when most remarriages of divorced persons occur), there are more single persons than widowed persons from whom a divorced person may choose a mate. This fact provides a plausible explanation of the finding that divorced persons are more likely to enter marriage with a single person than with a widowed person. However, the line of reasoning is apparently more complex with respect to remarriages of widowed persons; more of them marry divorced persons than single persons, even though there are more single than divorced persons at every age. Here the explanation evidently must take into account selective factors which cause certain persons to remain single into older ages (when most remarriages of widowed persons occur). The data suggest that older divorced persons tend to be more attractive marriage partners than older single persons.

Nonetheless, there must be many people who do not choose a divorced person when remarrying, because of their attitudes toward divorce; these attitudes may affect the choice, regardless of which party was chiefly responsible for breaking the marriage.

FIGURE 27.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF MARRIAGES BY PREVIOUS MARITAL STATUS
OF BRIDE AND GROOM, 20 REPORTING STATES: 1953
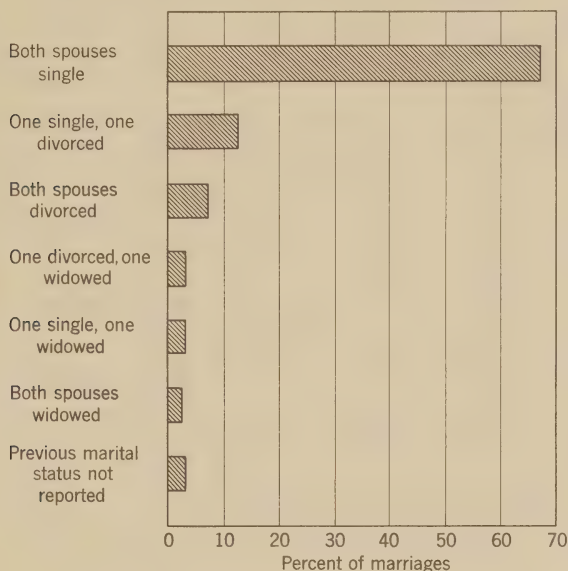
Note: Based on data in table 95.

Data on the marital backgrounds of remarried persons are presented by age in table 96 and figure 28. The summary figures in the total column are quite instructive, though they do not relate to age. About 62 percent of the men and women who remarried during the period 1947 to 1954 had been previously divorced but never widowed; another 1 or 2 percent had been divorced more than once but never widowed; about 6 percent had been divorced once and widowed once; and an additional 4 percent had been married more than twice, including at least once after divorce. Thus, about three-fourths of the persons remarrying had been previously divorced; the remaining one-fourth had been widowed but had never been divorced.

Likewise, it can be shown that about three-eighths of the persons remarrying had been previously widowed; the remaining five-eighths had been divorced but had never been widowed. Finally, about one out of every ten persons remarrying had been both widowed and divorced and the remainder had been either widowed or divorced but not both.

TABLE **96.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS WITH REMARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE, BY NUMBER OF TIMES DIVORCED OR WIDOWED, BY AGE AT CURRENT MARRIAGE AND SEX: JUNE 1954

[Percent not shown where base is less than 200,000]

Number of times widowed or divorced and sex	All remarried persons[1]	Age at current marriage (years)						
		14 to 24	25 to 29	30 to 34	35 to 39	40 to 44	45 to 54	55 and over
Men......................	100.0	...	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Divorced once (never widowed)...	61.8	...	85.8	77.2	69.3	67.9	53.2	12.2
Divorced more than once (never widowed)......................	1.1	...	1.9	2.8	0.8	0.8	...	0.7
Widowed once (never divorced)...	25.0	...	6.5	10.3	19.8	18.5	31.8	64.1
Widowed more than once (never divorced)......................	3.0	...	...	0.7	0.8	3.7	2.9	10.8
Divorced once and widowed once..	5.2	...	3.8	8.9	5.4	7.4	6.1	2.4
Other divorced and widowed......	3.8	...	1.9	...	3.9	1.6	6.1	9.8
Women......................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	...
Divorced once (never widowed)...	62.1	88.0	74.4	67.1	60.4	44.7	38.2	...
Divorced more than once (never widowed)......................	1.7	0.8	1.4	2.2	2.5	2.3	1.8	...
Widowed once (never divorced)...	21.0	4.9	14.9	15.7	20.8	25.6	42.2	...
Widowed more than once (never divorced)......................	4.2	1.6	2.1	1.2	4.2	9.8	6.5	...
Divorced once and widowed once..	7.0	4.2	5.3	10.4	8.1	11.2	4.0	...
Other divorced and widowed......	4.1	0.5	2.1	3.4	3.9	6.5	7.3	...

[1] Includes all persons (with marriages between 1947 and 1954) who had married more than once, whether or not still living with their spouse. Tables 94, 95, and 97 are less inclusive; they include only persons married more than once who were still living with their current spouse at the time of the survey in 1954.

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, table 21. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

FIGURE **28.**—PERCENT DIVORCED ONCE AND PERCENT WIDOWED ONCE, BY AGE AT CURRENT MARRIAGE, FOR PERSONS WITH REMARRIAGES IN 1947 TO 1954
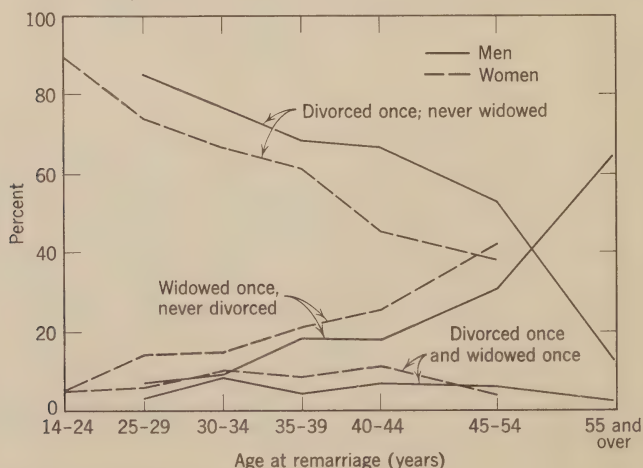
Note: Based on data in table 96.

These findings demonstrate conclusively that, among remarriages, usually at least one of the marriage partners has been divorced.

It becomes evident from the figures by age at remarriage, that three out of every four men under 35 years old at remarriage, and three out of every

four women under 30 years old at remarriage, had been divorced once but never widowed (table 96). In fact, up to the age of 55 years for men and 45 years for women, remarriages more often involved persons who had been divorced once but never widowed than persons who had been widowed once but never divorced. These two categories account for around 80 to 90 percent of all persons remarrying under the age of 55 years.

Since men tend to be older than their wives at first marriage, and since death rates are higher among men, age for age, the proportion of remarried women who had been previously widowed was higher than that for remarried men. Moreover, since men tend to be several years older than women at remarriage, it is appropriate to compare data for remarrying men of a given age with those for remarrying women a few years younger. Thus, among men who remarried between the ages of 45 and 54, about 35 percent had never been divorced; approximately the same percent of women who remarried between the ages of 40 and 44 had never been divorced.

Evidently a large proportion of the persons with more than one unsuccessful attempt at marriage are likely either to spend only a short time in their later marriages or to remain unmarried. This inference is suggested by a comparison of figures in tables 94 to 97.[11] The figures for those widowed more than once or both divorced and widowed are rather small for a refined analysis; perhaps it is sufficient to say that the previous marital status of their spouses is distributed rather widely.

Detailed distributions by number of times married, divorced, and widowed are shown in table 98 for persons with their last marriages between 1947 and 1954. These figures include data on adults of all ages. If they had been limited to adults who had passed the usual ages at remarriage, they might have been interpreted as summaries of lifetime marital histories. Instead, they show simply the number of recently married persons who had been married, divorced, and widowed a given number of times.

The larger proportion of men than of women reported as having been married one time, as having been divorced one time, and as having been widowed one time probably reflects the older age at which men usually enter first marriage; it may also reflect a slight downward bias in reporting number of times married, divorced, or widowed for men, perhaps, in part, because information is more often given for men by an intermediate respondent whose knowledge may be incomplete.

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[11] The entire marital experience of both the husband and wife, up to 1954, is summarized in table 97 for couples who married between 1947 and 1954 and who were still living together in 1954. Table 95 shows only the immediately preceding marital status of the bride and groom. Table 96, unlike tables 94, 95, and 97, includes those who had not remarried after their last marriage had been terminated. Table 97 shows no persons with two or more divorces but no experience as a widowed person who were still living with their last spouse in 1954, whereas table 96 shows that a number of persons were reported as having been divorced more than once but never widowed. Hence, it appears that, although some persons reported having had more than one divorce, none of them had stayed with their last spouse long enough to be enumerated as living with their spouse or that the number who did was so small that the sample failed to include any of them.

TABLE **97.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF COUPLES WITH MARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE, BY NUMBER OF TIMES DIVORCED OR WIDOWED FOR HUSBAND AND WIFE: JUNE 1954

Number of times divorced or widowed for husband	All married couples	Number of times divorced or widowed for wife					
		Never divorced or widowed	Divorced once (never widowed)	Divorced more than once (never widowed)	Widowed once (never divorced)	Widowed more than once (never divorced)	Divorced and widowed
Total.....................	100.0	79.5	13.3	...	4.7	0.8	1.7
Never divorced or widowed......	80.9	72.6	6.0	...	1.7	0.1	0.5
Divorced once (never widowed)..	12.2	4.8	5.5	...	1.1	0.3	0.5
Divorced more than once (never widowed).......................	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Widowed once (never divorced)..	4.8	1.6	1.2	...	1.6	0.2	0.2
Widowed more than once (never divorced).....................	0.5	0.2	...	...	0.2	0.1	0.1
Divorced and widowed...........	1.5	0.4	0.6	...	0.2	0.1	0.4

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, table 8. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

According to the data in table 98, about 80 percent of those with recent marriages had been married only once, 17 or 18 percent had been married twice, and only 2 or 3 percent had been married three times or more. All but 3 or 4 percent of those who had been divorced reported only one divorce and nearly all of those with more than one divorce reported only two. Close to one-sixth of those who had been widowed stated that they had been widowed more than once.

TABLE **98.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS WITH MARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE, BY NUMBER OF TIMES MARRIED, DIVORCED, AND WIDOWED, BY SEX: JUNE 1954

[Percent not shown where base is less than 200,000]

Number of times married	Men	Women	Number of times divorced	Men	Women	Number of times widowed	Men	Women
Total.......	100.0	100.0	Total[1].......	100.0	100.0	Total[2].......	100.0	100.0
1 time..........	80.4	79.3	1 time..........	97.3	96.1	1 time..........	84.4	82.2
2 times..........	17.4	17.9	2 times..........	2.3	3.8	2 times..........	6.3	12.1
3 times..........	1.8	2.4	3 times..........	0.4	0.1	3 times..........	8.3	5.5
4 times..........	0.3	0.3	4 times..........	...	...	4 times..........	...	0.2
5 or more.......	0.1	...	5 or more........	...	...	5 or more........	1.0	...

[1] Persons who had been divorced at least once.
[2] Persons who had been widowed at least once.

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 45, No. 12, table 20. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

Relation to educational background. A strong negative correlation between educational attainment and number of times married, without regard to age, is indicated by the data in table 99. The age factor is mentioned because older persons are the ones most likely to remarry, and they received their education at a time when it was common not to go far in school. The data on first marriage and remarriage rates standardized for age, shown in tables 87 and 90 above, provide evidence that the age

factor is quite important in this connection. The type of data shown in table 99, however, was not tabulated by age. The figures show only the simple relationship between the two factors of education and number of times married among all who married during the span of a few years.

One finding in the table which is probably not greatly affected by the age factor is the somewhat higher proportion of persons with two or more marriages among those who dropped out of college before graduation, as compared with college graduates. The lower percentage of college graduates with remarriages may have a foundation in those respects in which their motivational structure and habit patterns tend to be unique.

TABLE **99.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF PERSONS WITH MARRIAGES BETWEEN JANUARY 1947 AND SURVEY DATE, BY NUMBER OF TIMES MARRIED, BY YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED AND SEX: JUNE 1954

Number of times married and sex	Total	Elementary school		High school		College	
		0 to 7 years	8 years	1 to 3 years	4 years	1 to 3 years	4 years or more
Men....................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1 time....................	80.4	66.6	73.0	80.9	86.0	83.1	88.5
2 times...................	17.4	28.6	22.8	17.1	13.0	15.4	11.0
3 times...................	1.8	3.9	3.1	2.0	0.9	1.1	0.5
4 times or more...........	0.4	0.9	1.0	0.1	0.2	0.5	...
Women.................	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1 time....................	79.3	57.8	65.0	76.8	86.1	85.1	91.4
2 times...................	17.9	34.6	30.4	20.2	12.1	13.5	7.9
3 times...................	2.4	7.3	3.7	2.5	1.7	1.2	0.3
4 times or more...........	0.4	0.3	1.0	0.6	0.1	0.2	0.3

Source: National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports,* Vol. 45, No. 12, table 22. Based on Current Population Survey data collected by the Bureau of the Census.

CHAPTER 8

SEPARATION, DIVORCE, AND WIDOWHOOD

Attention in this chapter will be centered on persons with broken marriages—their ages when the marriages are dissolved, their incomes, and their living arrangements. For comparative purposes, some information is also presented on single and married persons.

Separation, divorce, and widowhood are often intermediate stages of marital status. Many divorced and widowed persons go on to remarriage. For those who do not, of course, dissolution of their marriages is the last event in their marriage history. Separated persons—those living apart from their spouses because of marital discord, but not divorced—may move in one of several directions; they may become reconciled with their spouses, or they may remain in an informal status of separation, or obtain limited legal separation, or move into divorced status.[1]

Age at dissolution of marriage

In 1950, women reported their current marital status and the length of time since they entered it. For a woman with a broken marriage, the age at which her marriage was broken was obtained by subtracting the duration of her current marital status from her age at the census date.[2] The younger women among those to whom this study is confined had been exposed to the risk of marriage dissolution for a shorter period, of course, than the older ones. However, the figures may be interpreted as showing the approximate ages at which dissolutions normally occur, among a cohort of women passing through the period of life from age 15 into their 50's.

It would seem reasonable to expect that persons who are relatively young at the time of divorce would be the most likely to remarry. Some evidence on this point may be inferred from the median ages of divorced

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[1] Unpublished records of a follow-up of a census of Wilmington, N. C., taken by the Bureau of the Census in 1946 showed that about one-half of those reported as "separated" had obtained "legal separations." (Under certain conditions, such separations subsequently end with final divorce decrees.) To what extent this result is typical of all separated persons in the United States is unknown. The Bureau has collected no data on the ultimate outcome of separations.

[2] For example, if a divorced woman who was 30 years old at the time of the census reported that she had been divorced 5 years, it was inferred that she had been 25 years old when she became divorced. Actually, she may have been anywhere between 30.0 and 30.9 years old at the census date and may have been divorced anywhere between 5.0 and 5.9 years. For a further discussion of this point, see *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter E, Duration of Current Marital Status, p. 5.

women who had been married once (table 100). Women who had been divorced for less than two years were about two years younger at the time of divorce than those who had been divorced for two years or more. Inasmuch as a substantial minority of divorced persons remarry within two years of their divorce, it may be assumed that those divorced for a longer period are less likely to remarry. (See Chapter 7, table 92.) Partly because separation is commonly (but by no means always) a preliminary step toward divorce, the median age at separation is lower by about two years than the median age at divorce.

TABLE 100.—MEDIAN AGE AT ENTERING CURRENT MARITAL STATUS AND MEDIAN NUMBER OF YEARS IN CURRENT MARITAL STATUS, FOR WOMEN MARRIED ONCE OR REMARRIED: 1950

Number of times married and current marital status	Median age at entering current marital status			Median number of years in current marital status
	All women 15 to 59 years old	In marital status less than 2 years	In marital status 2 years or more	
TOTAL				
Married, husband present...........	21.8	22.2	21.8	12.6
Separated..........................	28.9	27.8	29.4	4.1
Divorced..........................	31.4	30.2	31.7	4.6
Widowed..........................	40.0	47.7	39.0	7.8
MARRIED ONCE				
Married, husband present...........	20.9	20.6	20.9	13.4
Separated..........................	27.9	26.3	28.4	(1)
Divorced..........................	30.4	28.8	30.8	(1)
Widowed..........................	39.7	47.4	38.7	(1)
MARRIED MORE THAN ONCE				
Married, husband present...........	27.8	30.7	27.6	8.2
Separated..........................	33.7	34.1	33.6	(1)
Divorced..........................	35.7	35.6	35.7	(1)
Widowed..........................	41.8	48.7	40.6	(1)

[1] Not available.

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter E, Duration of Current Marital Status, tables 1, 2, 7, 16, 17, 21, 22, 26, and 27.

Unlike divorced women, women who had been widowed for a relatively short time were older at the time of entering widowhood, on the average, than those who had been widowed longer. This difference is evidently related to the fact that the age distribution of women under 60 years old who had been recently widowed was similar to the age distribution of persons at the time of death, that is, the numbers tend to increase rapidly with increasing age; and the fact that those who had been widowed for a longer time must have been younger at the time of widowhood, because their current ages would have otherwise extended beyond the limit of 59 years.

Duration of current marital status. Married women reported the longest period in their current marital status (table 100). Those under 60 years old in 1950 who were still in their first marriages had been

married an average of 13.4 years; those in second or subsequent marriages had been in their last marriage an average of 8.2 years. Widows reported an average of 7.8 years of widowhood, divorced women reported an average of 4.6 years since they got their divorces, and separated women reported that they had been living apart from their husbands for an average of 4.1 years. All of these women, aged 15 to 59 years, may be regarded as still of marriageable age.

The age limitation (less than 60 years old) serves the purpose of making the figures on the period of widowhood more meaningful for the study of remarriage than they would have been if the ages had extended upward indefinitely.[3] Moreover, a comparison of the median duration of divorce for all divorced women under 60 in 1950, namely, 4.6 years, with the median duration of divorce for those who remarried in the seven years before 1954, namely, 2.7 years (Chapter 7, table 92), suggests that those who ultimately remarried spent about three-fifths as many of their marriageable years in the status of divorced persons as the average divorced woman (including those who did not remarry). A similar comparison for widows suggests that those who ultimately remarried spent less than half as many of their marriageable years in the status of widows as the average widow (including those who did not remarry).

Differences by educational level. The median ages of women subject to first marriage, remarriage, separation, divorce, and widowhood and the median ages at which women entered these marital categories vary according to educational background, as can be seen from the 1950 Census figures in table 101.[4] Many of the women with less than four years of high school training who were subject to first marriage were girls in their teens, and their median age was considerably below that of women with a like amount of education who had already entered first marriage. On the other hand, those with a full high school education or at least some college education and who still had not married were older than those with a like amount of education who had already entered first marriage. Women (under 60 years old) who were college graduates and had not married had the especially high median age of about 33 years, or some

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[3] Most of the figures in tables 101 and 102 refer to women 15 to 54 years old, but the same comment applies to the figures in these tables as well as to those in table 100.

[4] The expression "subject to" is used here as follows: women subject to first marriage during the year preceding the 1950 Census included single women at the time of the census plus the estimated number who entered first marriage during that year (estimated from census data as one-half of those who were reported as having entered first marriage during the two years before the census); women subject to remarriage during the year preceding the census included widowed and divorced women at the time of the census plus the estimated number who entered remarriage during that year (estimated in a manner analogous to that for first marriages); women subject to separation included married women at the time of the census (separated persons being included in the count of married women); women subject to divorce (widowhood) included married women in 1950 plus the estimated number who became divorced (widowed) during the preceding year (estimated in a manner analogous to that for first marriages). The estimates of the number of persons subject to first marriage, remarriage, etc., are believed to be useful approximations for the type of analysis made in this chapter.

eight to nine years more than the median age at first marriage of college graduates who had already married. First marriage rates were relatively low for college graduates (as shown in Chapter 7, table 87), and the group subject to first marriage included many in the older ages who had never married.

TABLE **101.**—MEDIAN AGE OF WOMEN 15 TO 54 YEARS OLD SUBJECT TO AND ENTERING SPECIFIED MARITAL STATUS, BY YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED: 1948 TO 1950

Marital status	Median age of women subject to and entering specified marital status, by years of school completed					
	Total	Elementary, 0 to 8 years	High school		College	
			1 to 3 years	4 years	1 to 3 years	4 or more
Subject to[1] first marriage[2]........	19.9	17.6	17.2	21.9	22.3	32.6
Entered first marriage[2] [3]..........	20.6	20.1	19.0	20.8	21.7	23.8
Subject to remarriage..............	43.1	45.9	39.8	39.1	42.7	43.6
Entered remarriage[3]................	30.7	35.0	28.5	28.5	31.3	32.0
Subject to separation..............	35.5	39.6	33.6	32.0	35.5	36.3
Entered separation.................	27.8	29.7	24.5	27.2	31.1	34.3
Subject to divorce.................	35.5	39.6	33.6	32.0	35.5	36.3
Entered divorce....................	30.2	34.4	27.3	28.4	32.6	35.6
Subject to widowhood...............	35.5	39.7	33.6	32.0	35.6	36.3
Entered widowhood..................	47.7	49.2	45.7	44.9	47.4	47.3

[1] For an explanation of the expression "subject to," see text, footnote 4.

[2] 15 to 59 years old.

[3] Husband present.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter E, Duration of Current Marital Status, tables 5, 9, 19, 24, and 29; and Part 5, Chapter B, Education, table 8.

Women under 55 years old who had already remarried were about 13 years younger at the time of remarriage, on the average, than those who were subject to remarriage. Evidently, the younger women with broken marriages have a competitive advantage in the remarriage market, as compared with the older ones, and certainly they have a large number of years in which to remarry. Those with some high school training but no high school diploma were not only the youngest at first marriage, but were also among the youngest at remarriage.[5] Those with an elementary school education or none at all were younger than the average at first marriage; on the other hand, they were older than the average at their last remarriage, a fact which is related, in turn, to their having remarried more often, on the average, than others.

The patterns of the figures on remarriage in table 101 and on number of times married in Chapter 7, table 99, suggest that the duration of the first marriage before dissolution is greatest for those with four years or more of college. (Direct measures of this variable have not been made through the use of census data.) Moreover, among those with broken

[5] The figures on age at first marriage and remarriage in table 101 and those in Chapter 6, table 75, are not exactly comparable because those in table 101 relate to women in all areas and those in table 75 relate to urban women.

marriages, the youngest women at separation or divorce are those who left high school before graduation. These women are eight or nine years younger at the time when their marriages are broken, on the average, than women college graduates who become separated or divorced. This is about twice the difference between the two groups with respect to age at first marriage; hence, among those whose marriages are broken, college graduates must have remained in their first marriages much longer than those who dropped out of high school.

The age distributions of those subject to separation, divorce, and widowhood are virtually the same, because all three groups include the very large numbers of married women; those "subject to divorce" during the year before the census date include, in addition, the relatively small estimated number who actually obtained divorces during that period and those "subject to widowhood" likewise include the very small estimated number who actually became widowed during the period. Women under 55 who were subject to separation, divorce, and widowhood were about 35 or 36 years old, on the average. Their median ages by educational level show that those with high school (but no college) training were two or three years younger than the average and those with an elementary education or none were four years older than the average. Again, the concentration of those with little education among older persons is relevant here.

The median age at separation was about two years below that at divorce for women of all educational levels combined, but it varied for women of different educational levels. For those with little education, age at separation was about four years below that at divorce, whereas for those with four years of high school or some college training, age at separation was only a little over one year below that at divorce. The wider gap for the less well-educated may be a function, in part, of a greater incidence of desertion among those in the poorer segment of the population. Among those in the upper portion of the educational scale, separation is probably more often a prelude to a fairly prompt divorce.

The median age at separation or divorce is several years younger than the median age of those under 55 who are subject to separation or divorce, whereas the opposite is true of the median age at widowhood. It is the younger married women who are most likely to become separated or divorced and the older married women who are most likely to become widowed. The pattern of variation in median age at widowhood by educational level is like that for median age at divorce, however, in the sense that the least well-educated tend to be the oldest and those with intermediate amounts of education tend to be the youngest at the time of the most recent occurrence of widowhood or divorce.

The data on widowhood and divorce, shown in table 101, make no distinction between those married once and those who had remarried. If the basic data had been available in terms of age of the woman when she lost her first husband through death, the odds would seem to favor a simple

positive correlation between median age at widowhood and amount of education because those with less education no doubt have higher mortality rates and therefore are at a greater risk of losing their husbands through death at a relatively young age.   Moreover, the number of years by which the husband's age tends to exceed that of the wife is greatest among those with no high school education (Chapter 6, table 84) and women with older husbands are more likely to lose them by death than are other women of the same age.   In view of these facts, the explanation of the relatively high median age at widowhood for women with little education seems to rest upon the higher frequency of remarriage among these women, as shown in Chapter 7, table 99; in this case, the age when last widowed might well be above the average.

Further evidence on the point just made is found in table 102 and figure 29.   Here it can be seen that the widowhood rate is highest among those with the least education and lowest for those who have graduated from high school, including those who have attended college.   The apparently higher widowhood rates for women in their teens than for those in

FIGURE **29.**—SEPARATION, DIVORCE, AND WIDOWHOOD RATES FOR WOMEN 15 TO 54 YEARS OLD, BY YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED AND COLOR: 1948 TO 1950
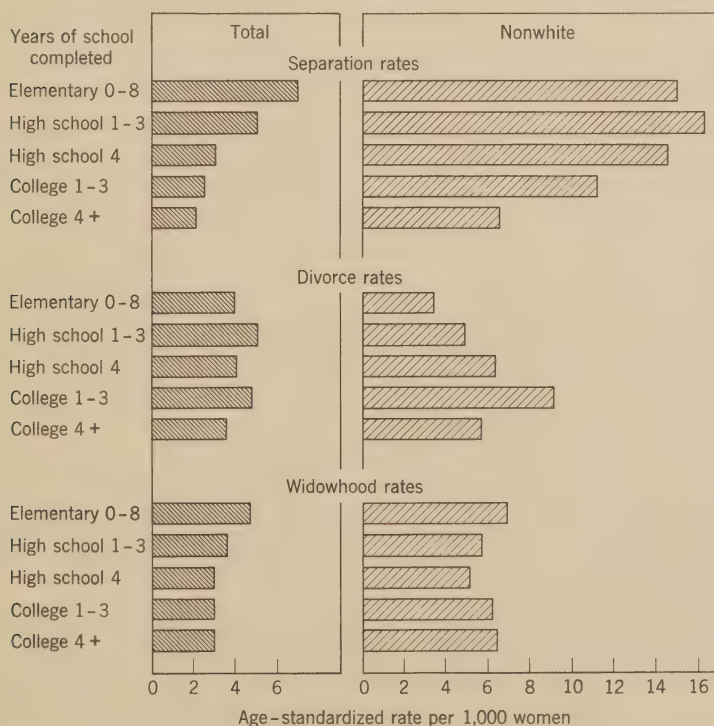
Note: Based on data in table 102.

their 20's may reflect erroneous reporting of "widowed" by mothers of illegitimate children, though these rates may actually reflect higher mortality rates among those types of men (probably, as a rule, from lower economic levels) who marry teen-age women. Aside from this irregularity, the widowhood rates tend to increase with age, as would be expected.

TABLE 102.—SEPARATION, DIVORCE, AND WIDOWHOOD RATES PER 1,000 WOMEN 15 TO 54 YEARS OLD SUBJECT TO SEPARATION, DIVORCE, AND WIDOWHOOD, RESPECTIVELY, BY AGE, YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED, AND COLOR: 1948 TO 1950

Age and color	Sepa-ration rate	Di-vorce rate	Widow-hood rate	Years of school completed and color	Sepa-ration rate[1]	Di-vorce rate[1]	Widow-hood rate[1]
Total..............	4.6	4.1	3.6	Total..............	4.6	4.1	3.6
15 to 19 years..........	23.5	12.6	2.5	Elementary: 0 to 8 years..	6.9	3.8	4.6
20 to 24 years..........	9.0	7.3	1.5	High school: 1 to 3 years..	5.0	4.9	3.5
25 to 29 years..........	5.3	4.8	1.4	4 years.......	3.0	4.0	2.9
30 to 34 years..........	3.7	3.5	1.9	College: 1 to 3 years..	2.4	4.7	2.9
35 to 44 years..........	3.0	3.4	3.6	4 or more.....	2.0	3.4	2.9
45 to 54 years..........	1.8	2.2	8.1				
				Nonwhite..............	15.0	4.4	6.4
Nonwhite..............	16.5	4.7	6.2	Elementary: 0 to 8 years..	15.0	3.4	6.9
15 to 19 years..........	65.9	10.8	5.5	High school: 1 to 3 years..	16.3	4.8	5.7
20 to 24 years..........	29.8	7.9	3.3	4 years.......	14.6	6.3	5.1
25 to 29 years..........	20.7	5.7	3.5	College: 1 to 3 years..	11.3	9.1	6.2
30 to 34 years..........	12.8	4.7	4.1	4 or more.....	6.5	5.6	6.4
35 to 44 years..........	8.8	3.5	8.0				
45 to 54 years..........	5.3	1.7	10.2				

[1] Standardized for age.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter E, Duration of Current Marital Status, tables 19, 24, and 29; and Part 5, Chapter B, Education, table 8.

Differences by color. Very high separation rates are found among nonwhite women of all ages under 55, but especially among those under the age of 20. Though less striking, the divorce rate, as computed from the census data for 1950, is also quite high for nonwhite teen-age women but still higher for white women of this age, as the figures for all women in comparison with those for nonwhite women imply. Again, the misreporting of marital status for mothers of illegitimate children may affect adversely the results for this young age group, but it is also very evident, from the figures shown above in Chapter 6, table 72, that marriages contracted by women in their teens are much more likely to be dissolved within a few years than those contracted by older women. Both separation and divorce rates show a steady decline as age advances, presumably because those couples with serious adjustment problems tend to dissolve the marriage fairly soon or either resolve their marital difficulties within a reasonably short period or become reconciled to the situation through the passage of time.

Separation rates tend to go down as education goes up, but the same does not hold for divorce rates. The highest divorce rates are those for women who dropped out of high school or college. It may be that certain predisposing factors in the social background and psychological orientation of these persons that affect their persistence in education also affect their persistence in marriage.

The separation rate for nonwhite women is about four times as high as that for white women. Although the general tendency for separation rates to decline as education advances holds for nonwhite women as well as for other women, the fact remains that there is really not much variation in the separation rates according to amount of schooling for that 95 percent of the nonwhite women below the college level who are subject to separation. Nonwhite women who have been to college, and especially those with college degrees, have separation rates that are lower than those for other nonwhite women but still much higher than those for white women with the same amount of education.

Divorce rates for nonwhite women tend to increase as education rises up to, but not including, the level of college graduation. For those below the level of high school graduation as a whole, divorce rates for nonwhite women are not very different from those for white women, and this is the educational range that includes most of the nonwhite women. In fact, the divorce rate for all nonwhite women is about the same as that for all women. Where impermanence of marriage (as measured by census data) differs the most by color is not in relation to divorce but to separation and widowhood.

Marital status by education and income

Since most of those who remarry do so before the age of 55 years, the ensuing discussion of social and economic characteristics of persons in this age range with broken marriages will be presented in the context that these are the kinds of people who are most subject to remarriage. Comparisons will be made with married and single persons in order to improve the perspective. A similar discussion will also be presented for older persons. These persons are of special interest from the point of view of dependency problems.[6]

Age groups most subject to remarriage. Among white men 30 to 54 years old, the educational level of those married and living with their wives exceeds that of other men in this age range, with single and divorced men about equal distances below (table 103). Among white women, however, the educational level of spinsters exceeds that of other women in this age range, with divorced and married women living with their husbands following in that order. It appears that many well-educated single women either decide to put their talents to work in business or professional careers rather than in home building or they experience difficulty in finding a suitable marital partner. Divorced persons constitute the best educated class of white persons with broken marriages. Widowed and separated white men are about equally low in the educational scale, but among white women those who are separated have less education than those who are widowed.

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[6] Recent data on the number of children in broken homes, by marital status of the parent, are presented in Chapter 2, table 26. Data of this type are not available by age of the parent.

TABLE **103.**—MEDIAN YEARS OF SCHOOL COMPLETED, FOR PERSONS 30 TO 54 YEARS OLD, BY MARITAL STATUS, AGE, COLOR, AND SEX: 1950

Marital status and color	Men			Women		
	30 to 34 years old	35 to 44 years old	45 to 54 years old	30 to 34 years old	35 to 44 years old	45 to 54 years old
White....................	11.9	10.4	8.8	12.1	11.0	9.0
Single......................	11.5	9.7	8.5	12.3	12.3	12.1
Married, spouse present......	12.0	10.6	8.9	12.0	10.9	9.0
Separated....................	10.0	8.9	8.4	10.3	9.1	8.6
Other married...............	11.4	10.0	8.7	11.7	10.6	9.0
Widowed.....................	10.1	8.8	8.4	11.1	10.0	8.8
Divorced....................	11.2	10.0	8.4	12.0	11.3	10.2
Nonwhite.................	7.8	6.8	5.8	8.4	7.5	6.5
Single......................	8.1	6.8	5.6	8.6	7.7	6.7
Married, spouse present......	7.7	6.8	5.9	8.3	7.5	6.6
Separated....................	7.4	6.7	5.3	8.1	7.4	6.2
Other married...............	8.1	7.2	5.5	9.0	7.5	6.8
Widowed.....................	7.1	6.3	5.8	7.7	6.9	6.1
Divorced....................	8.8	8.2	7.0	9.4	8.6	7.7

Source: *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 5, Chapter B, Education, tables 5 and 8.

There is less variation in educational level by marital status among nonwhite persons in their middle years than among white persons in the same age range. Moreover, the rankings are different. Among the non-whites, divorced men and women have the highest education, single persons and married persons living with their spouses are intermediate, and separated persons stand slightly above the widowed, who rank lowest.

Both white and nonwhite married men living with their spouses in 1950 had higher median incomes than those in any other marital status group (table 104). This fact suggests, on the one hand, that men who are relatively successful in their financial endeavors are generally the most likely to have enduring marriages and, on the other hand, that the pressure of family responsibilities provides an incentive to succeed financially.

Among those with broken marriages, divorced men had larger incomes than separated men, thus lending support to the popular saying that "separation is the poor man's divorce." The support for this notion would no doubt be still stronger if the data for separated persons had excluded those who were in this status only as an interlude before divorce. Widowed white men had only slightly higher incomes than those who were separated and widowed nonwhite men had the lowest incomes of all. The low income ratings for widowers is further evidence that mortality rates tend to be highest among persons in the lowest economic groups.

The incomes of single men in the age range 25 to 44 years were quite low, also. Since about two-thirds of these men were above 30 years old, this observation is consistent with the one made in Chapter 6, in connection with the discussion of table 78, to the effect that men who marry above the age of 30 years tend to have lower incomes than those who marry in their late 20's. Moreover, as will be shown in the following section, those who do not marry at all have even lower incomes than those who marry relatively late in life.

TABLE **104.**—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF MEN 25 TO 44 YEARS OLD BY MONEY INCOME IN 1949, BY MARITAL STATUS AND COLOR: 1950

Marital status and color	Total	Income in 1949				Median income in 1949
		Under $1,000	$1,000 to $1,999	$2,000 to $2,999	$3,000 and over	
White men, 25 to 44 years[1]......	100.0	11.4	14.6	29.1	45.0	$2,827
Single..............................	100.0	29.4	21.4	39.1	10.1	1,963
Married, wife present................	100.0	7.8	13.1	27.2	51.9	3,071
Separated...........................	100.0	24.4	21.6	35.3	18.7	2,115
Other married.......................	100.0	19.1	18.4	29.7	32.8	2,421
Widowed.............................	100.0	24.5	19.4	31.7	24.4	2,191
Divorced............................	100.0	20.5	19.5	37.2	22.7	2,269
Nonwhite men, 25 to 44 years[1]...	100.0	31.1	32.6	26.9	9.5	$1,581
Single..............................	100.0	44.8	29.4	21.7	4.1	1,176
Married, wife present................	100.0	27.3	33.1	28.4	11.1	1,684
Separated...........................	100.0	37.9	33.4	23.4	5.3	1,360
Other married.......................	100.0	33.5	32.9	26.5	7.2	1,502
Widowed.............................	100.0	44.9	31.6	19.3	4.3	1,162
Divorced............................	100.0	32.7	31.9	25.9	9.7	1,545

[1] Noninstitutional population reporting on income.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter D, Marital Status, tables 6 and 7.

Income data for women by marital status are subject to different interpretations than those for men, of course. Married women in their middle years who are living with their husbands are by far the most likely to have no income, generally because their time is occupied with the care of children (table 105 and figure 30). Married women living apart from their husbands because the husbands are in institutions or because of some reason other than marital discord are next most likely to have no income. Among those with broken marriages, divorced women are not only the most likely to have some income but are also the ones with the largest average amount of income; next in order are widowed women and, finally, separated women. Thus, separated women, as well as separated men, rank relatively low in the economic scale, on the average. Moreover, in the light of the data at hand it seems reasonably likely that married women who eventually get a divorce have had more work experience and are otherwise more capable of self-support than married women who eventually become separated but do not get a divorce.

The median income of single women 25 to 54 years old with income is clearly the highest for women of comparable age in any marital status. The spinsters include many who would rather continue their work in a satisfying job than to marry a man who falls far short of their ideal. Their incomes are higher than those of divorced persons perhaps in part because they have had more education and in part because they have probably had more continuous work experience, on the average. Single women are the most likely to have full-time employment.[7]

[7] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–50, No. 36, table 5; and No. 50, table 6.

Table **105.**—Percent with No Income in 1949 and Median Income in 1949, for
Women 25 to 54 Years Old, by Marital Status and Age

Marital status	Percent of women with no income in 1949			Median income in 1949, for women with income		
	25 to 34 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 54 years	25 to 34 years	35 to 44 years	45 to 54 years
Total women[1]...............	58.6	57.3	56.9	$1,311	$1,368	$1,321
Single.........................	16.6	19.4	22.1	2,030	2,161	2,156
Married, husband present........	67.6	66.1	68.3	1,010	1,124	1,081
Separated......................	24.8	20.1	26.1	972	1,185	1,114
Other married..................	39.8	35.7	35.2	1,247	1,385	1,346
Widowed.......................	20.4	18.8	25.3	1,386	1,393	1,290
Divorced.......................	15.3	12.9	17.2	1,589	1,789	1,742

[1] Noninstitutional population reporting on income.

Source: Derived from *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter D, Marital Status, table 6.

Figure **30.**—Percent with No Income in 1949 and Median Income in 1949,
for Women 35 to 44 Years Old, by Marital Status
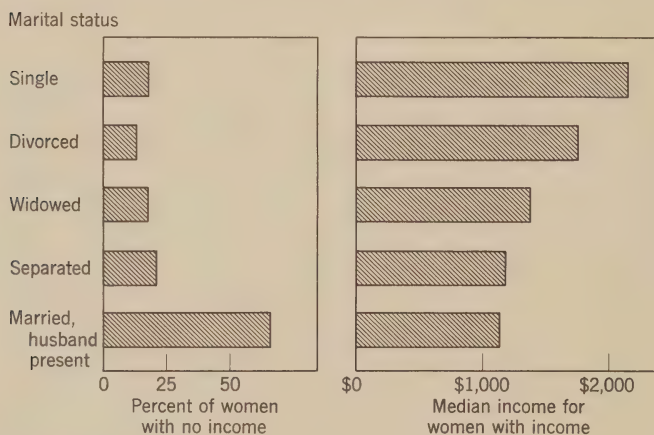
Note: Based on data in table 105.

Especially noteworthy is the high median income of single women above the usual age at marriage as compared with the low median income of single men of the same age. The incomes of men in general are about twice as high as those of women, but those of bachelors 25 to 44 years old in 1949 were lower than those of spinsters of comparable age. Marital selection obviously operates in different ways for men than for women in regard to income. The larger the man's income, the more likely he is to marry; but the larger the woman's income, the more likely she is to remain single. The business or professional career of the man suffers few ill effects if he marries; but that of the woman may suffer, and it probably used to do so in more instances a decade or two ago than at present. With more and more employment opportunities opening up now than formerly to married women, the favored income position of single women in the middle years may become less pronounced in the future.

Older age groups. Married men above the age of 55 years, like those under 55, enjoy the highest incomes; widowed and divorced men occupy an intermediate position; and single and separated men fall at the lower end of the income scale (table 106).   Among those who had lost their wives by death or divorce, the ones with higher incomes were more likely to have remarried; this point was made in Chapter 7, in connection with the discussion of table 88.   The median incomes of older married men living apart from their wives are just below those of married men living with their wives.   Probably a large proportion of the absent wives are in institutions that care for persons with mental or chronic illnesses.

TABLE **106.**—PERCENT WITH NO INCOME IN 1949 AND MEDIAN INCOME IN 1949, FOR PERSONS 55 YEARS OLD AND OVER, BY MARITAL STATUS, AGE, AND SEX

Marital status and sex	Percent with no income in 1949			Median income in 1949, for persons with income		
	55 to 64 years	65 to 74 years	75 years and over	55 to 64 years	65 to 74 years	75 years and over
Total men[1]...................	7.4	14.4	26.6	$2,547	$1,437	$770
Single.........................	14.1	19.3	28.7	1,743	896	681
Married, wife present...........	5.9	12.1	20.9	2,722	1,658	853
Separated......................	12.4	16.0	21.9	1,592	844	614
Other married..................	9.7	17.5	33.6	2,308	1,417	723
Widowed........................	14.0	21.0	34.3	1,959	945	691
Divorced.......................	10.2	13.1	18.6	1,908	949	649
Total women[1]................	60.0	51.8	50.2	$1,020	$692	$621
Single.........................	26.0	32.1	40.0	1,869	967	747
Married, husband present........	75.2	69.1	64.1	872	626	589
Separated......................	36.3	39.7	44.8	952	670	590
Other married..................	44.2	48.7	53.2	1,125	692	624
Widowed........................	37.7	40.4	48.0	995	687	612
Divorced.......................	25.0	30.6	35.5	1,358	762	635

[1] Noninstitutional population reporting on income.

Source: Same as table 105.

The general level of the figures on the percent of older men with no income during the year before the census may be too high because of errors in reporting, but the patterns of increase in these figures with advancing age are nonetheless of interest.   These figures indicate that, on the average, the proportion with no income just about doubled from one age group to the next (7, 14, and 27 percent).

Half or more of the women in the age groups over 55 years reported no income for the year 1949.   The proportion with no income increased with age for all marital status groups except those married and husband present.   The increase in the proportion of married women with income as they advanced in age may reflect the growing proportion entitled to old age benefits upon retirement of their husbands.

Median incomes of women at the older ages, for those with income, were still by far the highest for those who were single.   Divorced women and "other married" women had median incomes somewhat above those for widowed and separated women.   Only one-fourth to one-third of the older married women living with their husbands had any income and their incomes were the smallest; but since their incomes usually supplemented

their husbands' incomes, these women were not necessarily in the poorest economic condition.

Living arrangements by marital status and income

As a conclusion to the analysis of unbroken and broken marriages, this section will deal with the family living arrangements of persons according to their income levels. Selected data bearing on this subject will be presented first for those approaching middle age, among whom remarriage is a common occurrence, and second for those entering and passing through the later years of life. One of the chief aims of this inquiry is to find out to whom persons in different income levels tend to turn for support or companionship in their family living when their marriages have become broken. It should be acknowledged at the outset that at least one more level of classification of the data would be most helpful, namely, the income level of the entire family to which the person in question is only one of the contributors—and often a minor contributor—or to which he makes no contribution at all.

Persons approaching middle age. This section deals with persons 35 to 44 years old. Married men in this age group living with their wives and who were heads of primary families in 1950 had a median income about $500 higher than men in any other group (table 107). These men were heads of their own households. Divorced men who were heads of their households (heads of primary families or primary individuals) ranked next financially. Most of these divorced men had been likewise living with their wives until a relatively short time earlier. But the same can be said of the widowed and separated men, who did not fare so well economically. Among all types of household heads with broken marriages, there was little difference in income level between those with other family members present (heads of primary families) and those living alone (primary individuals), within each marital status class.

Men with either broken or unbroken marriages who moved in with their parents or continued to live with their parents (child of head), however, were a few notches lower in the income scale, on the average. Separated and divorced men who chose to live with nonrelatives (secondary individuals) tended to have a few hundred dollars more income than those who went home to their parents. These facts suggest that many of the men who turn to their parents during a period of marital crisis may have made a poorer adjustment in their economic ventures than others had, perhaps as a result, in many instances, of their never having successfully broken their ties with their parents. Other circumstances may, of course, have been controlling factors in other situations.

Women 35 to 44 years old who were wives of household heads were less likely to be income recipients than married women of the same age living with their parents, and the income of the former was far below that of the latter. The housewife is apparently more likely to have part-time

employment, if any, whereas her sister who is not a housewife is more likely to have full-time employment. When a married woman and her husband below middle age live with the parents of one or the other, it is often for the purpose of providing good care for the young couple's children while both of the young parents work outside the home and thereby improve the living standards of the entire extended family.

TABLE **107.**—MEDIAN INCOME IN 1949 AND PERCENT WITH NO INCOME IN 1949, FOR PERSONS 35 TO 44 YEARS OLD IN SELECTED MARITAL STATUS AND FAMILY STATUS CATEGORIES, BY SEX

Family status and sex	Married, spouse present	Separated	Divorced	Widowed	Single
MEDIAN INCOME IN 1949, FOR PERSONS WITH INCOME[1]					
Men 35 to 44 years old:					
Head of primary family[2].........	$3,251	$1,978	$2,754	$2,297	$2,494
Child of head....................	$2,214	$1,824	$2,088	$2,067	$2,078
Primary individual[3].............	...	$1,968	$2,749	$2,335	$2,321
Secondary individual[4]..........	...	$2,008	$2,498	$1,876	$2,106
Women 35 to 44 years old:					
Head of primary family[2].........	...	$1,201	$1,783	$1,398	$2,339
Wife of head....................	$1,110	...	...	...	...
Child of head....................	$1,592	$1,299	$1,813	$1,619	$2,142
Primary individual[3].............	...	$1,190	$2,047	$1,461	$2,579
Secondary individual[4]..........	...	$1,161	$1,571	$1,211	$1,930
PERCENT WITH NO INCOME[1]					
Women 35 to 44 years old:					
Head of primary family[2].........	...	18.3	10.0	17.2	7.4
Wife of head....................	66.3	...	...	...	...
Child of head....................	57.7	29.3	18.5	23.0	22.6
Primary individual[3].............	...	11.7	6.3	12.9	5.0
Secondary individual[4]..........	...	16.8	12.3	16.2	17.8

[1] Noninstitutional population reporting on income.

[2] Head of a household with one or more relatives present.

[3] Head of a household with no relatives present.

[4] A lodger, resident employee, member of the Armed Forces, or other person (except an inmate of an institution) who is not the head of a household and who has no relatives present.

Source: Same as table 105.

Women under middle age with broken marriages were most likely to return to their parental homes if they had no income during the preceding year. No doubt many of those who reported no income for the year before the census had suffered a break in their marriage earlier in the census year but had meantime obtained employment or regular income from alimony or death benefits. The ones most likely to have had incomes during the preceding calendar year were those living in their own home alone (as primary individuals); divorced women living thus had the best incomes of any group with broken marriages. Among separated women and widows, however, incomes were highest among those living with their parents. These facts raise a question as to whether young divorced women with better jobs (than other divorced women have) tend to prefer an independent way of living or whether their parents tend to discourage them from returning to their parental homes.

Among all types of women in their 30's and 40's with broken marriages, those living as lodgers or servants in the homes of nonrelatives (as secondary individuals) had the lowest median incomes. A relatively large proportion of the women with this type of family status were nonwhites.

The data on single persons 35 to 44 years old shown in table 107 throw additional light on the economic status of those who postpone marriage until they are past the usual age at entering a first marriage or who never do marry. About four-tenths of these persons in 1950 were still living with their parents. The incomes of such persons tended to fall well below those of single persons who were maintaining a household (as head of a primary family or as a primary individual). Those still living with their parents no doubt included many who were doing unpaid family work, others with physical or mental handicaps, and still others who had neglected their own careers in order to care for their aging parents. Also quite low in the money income scale were single persons living with nonrelatives in ordinary homes or in quasi households (as secondary individuals). Among these persons were single men in the Armed Forces and others working at jobs with relatively impermanent locations, such as construction workers and migratory laborers. Those in the Armed Forces and hired farm workers living with their employers received part of their remuneration in the form of free living quarters and food, which was not included in the income reported in table 107. Another group of men with relatively low incomes but with relatively high educational levels is the substantial number of unmarried clergymen.

Older age groups. Among men in and beyond middle age, as well as among those below middle age, the ones with the highest median incomes were those married and living with their wives in their own households (table 108). Older men living with their children (as parent of head) were most likely to have no income. Among men 65 years old and over there was not much variation in income except for the higher level of those married and living in their own homes.

About two-thirds to three-fourths of the married women 55 years old and over living with their husbands in their own households reported no income. These high proportions were not far from those reported by women living with their children. The economic well-being of these women was obviously dependent, as a rule, upon that of the persons who supported them. Even among older women who were listed as heads of primary families, around 40 percent had no income; apparently these women were being supported, in most cases, by their adult children who were living with them. Whether an older woman or one of her children is listed as the head, under such circumstances, is a matter which the respondent decides when the census is taken. As indicated elsewhere, the decision is often based on which person or group originally occupied the home, rather than on which was the chief source of the family's support.

TABLE **108.**—PERCENT WITH NO INCOME IN 1949 AND MEDIAN INCOME IN 1949, FOR PERSONS 55 YEARS OLD AND OVER IN SELECTED FAMILY STATUS CATEGORIES, BY AGE AND SEX

Family status and sex	Percent with no income in 1949			Median income in 1949, for persons with income		
	55 to 64 years	65 to 74 years	75 years and over	55 to 64 years	65 to 74 years	75 years and over
MEN[1]						
Head of primary family[2].........	5.8	11.8	20.5	$2,736	$1,645	$851
Married, wife present.........	5.5	11.2	19.0	2,761	1,676	860
Primary individual..............	10.1	13.3	19.0	1,698	860	686
Parent of head...................	23.7	33.8	48.0	2,000	871	627
Secondary individual............	11.2	17.3	27.5	1,864	996	696
WOMEN[1]						
Head of primary family[2].........	35.6	39.7	42.2	1,120	743	678
Primary individual..............	18.6	21.6	26.1	1,323	752	656
Wife of head....................	75.5	69.1	63.7	864	625	587
Parent of head..................	65.7	61.4	63.8	826	590	559
Secondary individual............	21.6	29.2	38.9	1,239	808	639

[1] Noninstitutional population reporting on income.

[2] For definitions of terms, see footnotes on table 107.

Source: Same as table 105.

Between one-fifth and two-fifths of the women 55 and over living apart from relatives (as primary or secondary individuals) reported no incomes for 1949, but those with income had median incomes that compared favorably with those for women who were heads of primary families. It may be surprising to find such large proportions of women living alone who reported having had no income during the preceding year. The explanation undoubtedly varies widely for subgroups of these women. In some instances, the woman had only recently lost her husband, hence she was living meanwhile from the family savings or had obtained employment shortly before the census enumeration. In other instances, the woman may have been receiving contributions from relatives or some type of insurance or old age benefits but did not think of reporting them as income. Still others who earned their living as household workers received their income in kind, with no regular payment in the form of money.

In general, the incomes of older persons drop off sharply between the ages of 65 and 75 and thereafter remain quite low. Economic hardships among many of these persons are no doubt very prevalent, regardless of their family status. Among those who do not experience economic hardship, the reason often lies in the support given them by family members with whom they live.[8]

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[8] As pointed out early in this chapter, information is needed on the income levels of the entire families containing older persons. Such information should become available from tabulations being planned by the Bureau of the Census on the basis of data from the March 1956 Current Population Survey.

CHAPTER 9

FUTURE HOUSEHOLD FORMATION

Consumers of family statistics use information on the past trends and current status of household formation to forecast future trends. They generally want to know whether the annual net increase in the number of households in the long-range future is likely to be greater or smaller than that for some base period in the recent past. There is also much demand for the best available indication of the future increase in number of households on a short-range basis.

Household projections, 1960 to 1975

Earlier projections. The Bureau of the Census made its first specific attempt to provide data on future household formation during World War II when certain governmental agencies urgently needed such information to allocate materials for industrial production. The task of these agencies was to see that at least minimum civilian needs for housing, household appliances, and the like would be provided while direct war needs were being met. Research workers in these agencies turned to the Bureau of the Census for advice on the probable future growth in number of households. This stimulus led the Bureau in 1943 to develop and publish its first set of household projections.[1] The methodology, in brief, consisted of projecting the number of households on the basis of past trends in the proportion of persons in each age and sex group who were heads of households,[2] and adjusting the results for the effects of wartime conditions on the number of marriages and on the extent of "doubling," or sharing of the living quarters of others.

After World War II, a revised set of household projections was prepared in the light of wartime developments.[3] Some refinements of the earlier method were introduced but the approach was essentially the same as in 1943. One important difference in the results was that, whereas the earlier projection implied that the effects of the war on household forma-

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[1] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Population—Special Reports*, Series P–1943, No. 2. The number of "families," as the term was used at that time, was comparable with the number of households according to present usage.

[2] A prototype of this methodology had been used in the monograph issued by the National Resources Planning Committee, entitled *The Problems of a Changing Population*, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1938, p. 25.

[3] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Population—Special Reports*, Series P–46, No. 4.

tion would disappear by 1950, the 1946 projection implied that there would be a permanent gain of half a million households because of fundamental changes during the war years in the direction of higher marriage rates and of higher rates of household maintenance by persons in the middle and older ages.

The household projections made in both 1943 and 1946, however, proved to be lower than the actual numbers of households at the projected dates. In preparing the projections in 1946, a medium, or "most probable," series was developed and, in addition, a high series and a low series were made. The high series figure for 1955 was actually reached in 1951 and that for 1960 was reached in 1955.

In the late 1940's, when the housing shortage was becoming increasingly acute, and when policy makers for large industrial plants were depending more and more on statistics which were relevant for appraising potential future demand for their products, the Bureau of the Census undertook another revision of the household projections. This work was not completed in 1949, as originally planned, for several reasons. In the first place, the Bureau's analysts were preoccupied with plans for the 1950 Census. In the second place, the results of the 1950 Census were expected within a short time, and the analysts decided to wait until the Current Population Survey data could be compared with these results. Moreover, because the Bureau had adopted a new set of family concepts in 1947, a new methodology had to be developed before the several types of family units could be projected. It was not until the end of 1952, therefore, that the third set of household projections was published.[4] The basic data used in this undertaking were drawn mainly from Current Population Reports for 1944 to 1946, and 1949 to 1951.

The 1952 study, like that for 1946, included high, medium, and low series projections for 1955 and 1960. All three series of projections were presented for households, married couples, and families. In addition, medium projections were shown for several categories of households, married couples, families, and subfamilies classified by type. The method involved numerous steps through which successive subdivisions (by age, family status, etc.) of the projected total population were made until those required had been isolated. The projections of the total number of households are shown in table 109, with figures for selected earlier years for comparison. Although the annual household figures for 1947 to 1952 had been subject to two revisions by early 1955, the revisions were largely offsetting.[5] The medium projections for July 1955 were essentially in line with data from the Current Population Survey for April 1955; likewise,

[4] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 42. The present author was assisted in the preparation of these projections by Elizabeth A. Larmon and Emanuel Landau. The text of the report contains a full statement on methods used.

[5] For an explanation of the revisions, see text of U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 53.

the medium and high projections for 1960 were still regarded as reasonable at the end of 1955, but the low projections for 1960 were considered too low to be realistic.

TABLE **109.**—NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS, 1930 TO 1952, AND PROJECTIONS, 1955 AND 1960

Date and series	Figures in use in late 1952		Figures on revised basis as of 1955	
	Number of households	Average annual increase since preceding date	Number of households	Average annual increase since preceding date
April 1930 (census)................	29,905,000	...	29,905,000	...
April 1940 (census)................	34,949,000	504,000	34,949,000	504,000
Estimates (CPS):				
April 1947.....................	39,138,000	595,000	39,107,000	594,000
April 1948.....................	40,720,000	1,582,000	40,532,000	1,425,000
April 1949.....................	42,107,000	1,387,000	42,182,000	1,650,000
March 1950.....................	43,468,000	1,485,000	43,554,000	1,475,000
April 1951.....................	44,564,000	1,011,000	44,656,000	999,000
April 1952.....................	45,464,000	900,000	45,504,000	848,000
April 1953.....................	...	...	46,334,000	830,000
April 1954.....................	...	...	46,893,000	559,000
April 1955.....................	...	...	47,788,000	895,000
July 1955 (projections):				
High series...................	48,401,000	915,000	...	...
Medium series.................	47,701,000	697,000	...	...
Low series....................	46,611,000	357,000	...	...
July 1960 (projections):				
High series...................	52,402,000	800,000	...	...
Medium series.................	50,822,000	624,000	...	...
Low series....................	47,985,000	275,000	...	...

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 42, table 1; No. 59, table 4; and unpublished data.

Projections prepared in 1955. A new appraisal of the prospects for household and family formation was made in connection with the preparation of the present monograph. Data collected in the Current Population Surveys, especially those for 1954 and 1947,[6] were used as a basis for bringing up to date the projections for 1960 and for extending them to 1965, 1970, and 1975.

The new projections employed the same techniques, in general, as those used in the 1952 study. Some simplifications were incorporated to reduce the amount of computing time; those included greater reliance on ten-year, instead of five-year, age groups of the population in the several marital status and family status categories, and some telescoping of intermediate steps. (A more detailed description of the methodology is presented in Appendix C.)

Two sets of illustrative projections were prepared in 1955 and were designated Series A and Series B. Because the Series B projections were based on the simple assumption that the proportion of persons in each category by marital status and family status (within each age and sex group) would remain the same in future years as in 1954, this series will be commented upon first. This assumption can be justified, as one alternative,

[6] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, Nos. 10, 16, 17, 55, and 56.

on the grounds that several measures related to household formation, such as the ratios of households and families to the number of adults, and also the doubling rate and the percent married, tended to stabilize between 1951 and 1954 (table 110 and figure 31). The assumption is warranted to the extent that the plateaus reached by these measures represented a relative saturation of the adult population with respect to the formation of separate households and families.

TABLE 110.—TRENDS OF SELECTED FACTORS RELATED TO HOUSEHOLD FORMATION: 1947 TO 1954

Year	Households per 100 persons 21 years and over	Families per 100 persons 21 years and over	Percent of married couples without own household	Percent married among females 14 years and over
1947	41.8	38.3	8.74	64.2
1948	42.7	39.2	7.17	64.6
1949	43.8	40.1	6.12	66.1
1950	44.6	40.2	5.59	66.1
1951	45.3	40.5	4.86	66.5
1952	45.8	40.9	4.25	66.6
1953	46.2	40.7	4.17	66.9
1954	46.3	40.7	3.94	67.0

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 41, tables 1 and 2; No. 50, table 1; No. 55, table 2; and No. 56, table 1; and Series P–25, No. 93, table 2; and No. 98, table 1.

FIGURE 31.—TRENDS OF SELECTED FACTORS RELATED TO HOUSEHOLD FORMATION: 1947 TO 1954
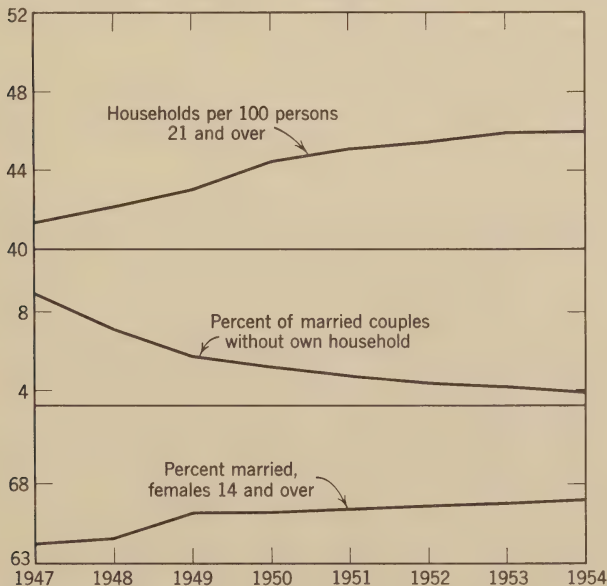
Note: Based on data in table 110.

The Series A projections were based on the assumption that (with exceptions noted below) the proportion of persons in selected categories by marital status and family status would continue to change between 1954 and 1960 in the same direction as between 1947 and 1954 but that the amount of the change would be only one-half as great between 1954 and 1960 as that between 1947 and 1954; it was assumed, furthermore, that there would be no further change in these measures between 1960 and 1975. Series A provides a set of higher projections than Series B. Series A can be defended, as an alternative, by pointing out that, despite the tendency noted above for the indicators of change to stabilize after 1951, a comparison of the figures for 1947 and 1954 shows that marked changes did occur during this longer period. The assumption that similar changes will continue at least during the balance of the 1950's, though on a reduced scale, should not seem unreasonable in the light of the still longer time perspective presented in table 111 and figure 32.

TABLE 111.—TRENDS OF SELECTED FACTORS RELATED TO HOUSEHOLD FORMATION: 1900 TO 1954

Year	Households per 100 persons 21 years and over	Families per 100 persons 21 years and over	Percent of married couples without own household	Percent married among females 14 years and over
1900.	39.1	(1)	(1)	55.2
1910.	39.4	(1)	5.39	57.1
1920.	40.0	(1)	(1)	58.9
1930.	41.0	38.4	6.06	59.5
1940.	41.6	38.3	6.82	59.5
1947.	41.8	38.3	8.74	64.2
1950.	44.6	40.2	5.59	66.1
1954.	46.3	40.7	3.94	67.0

[1] Not available.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 41, tables 1 and 2; No. 42, table 1; No. 55, table 2; and No. 56, table 1; Series P–25, No. 93, table 2; and No. 98, table 1; and *1930 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *General Report*, Chapter 10, table 20; and Vol. VI, *Families*, table 16.

The trends shown in these exhibits bear testimony to the fact that a demographic revolution occurred after the end of World War II. Levels of household and family formation were reached that were far above those for any earlier period for which data are available. The patterns of household formation do not appear to be explainable entirely in terms of a combination of making up for deferred establishment of homes during the depression and war years and of "borrowing" from the future.

There is, of course, a question as to how much farther the tendency to establish households will continue to rise in future years; possibly some larger fraction than one-half the 1947–1954 change in family status would have been more appropriate for the Series A projections, but it is impossible to say so with confidence at this time. In fact, it is entirely conceivable that the trend of change in family status patterns will be reversed and that a gradually declining propensity toward household formation will

develop. thus implying that the Series B assumption may be over-optimistic. It may be contended. however. that no further increase in tendency to form households constitutes a break in the long-time upward trend and is. therefore. a conservative assumption. Bearing this and other factors in mind. it seems better at present to omit projections based on the assumption of a declining rate of household formation. The evidence suggests that household formation rates have been approximating a new and higher "normal" level. The Series A projections imply that household formation rates will cease to rise after 1960. Again. some later date for this leveling off might well have been selected.

FIGURE 32.—TRENDS OF SELECTED FACTORS RELATED TO HOUSEHOLD FORMATION: 1900 TO 1954
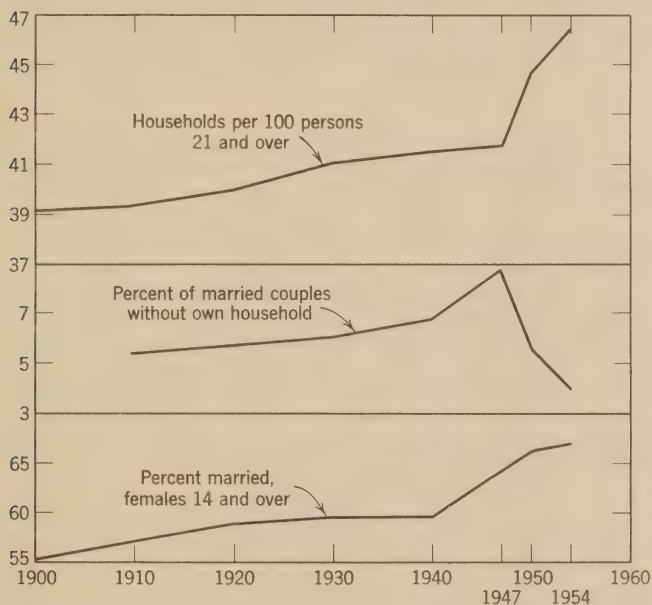
Note: Based on data in table 111.

It is impossible to state with confidence at this time that the merits of the assumptions underlying the Series A household projections are superior or inferior to those underlying Series B. In such a situation. practical research workers often take both the higher and lower projections into account or they average projections which appear to have about the same probabilities of occurrence. If the projections are revised frequently. that is, every three or four years. the current developments can be taken into account in reassessing the situation. Both detailed and simplified methods for doing this are presented in Appendix C.

The population base used in connection with both Series A and B household projections was the Series A population projections published

in 1953.[7] The only variable feature among Series A, B, C, and D population projections was the assumption regarding fertility rates. Variations in the fertility assumptions had no effect on the household projections for 1960 and 1965, however, because all of the children who would reach age 14 as late as 1965 had been born by 1951 and persons under 14 years of age are not recognized as heads of households or families. If Series C population projections had been used, the maximum amount by which the estimated number of households for 1975 would have dropped would have probably been less than 200,000, and that is a small amount in relation to the expected number of households in 1975 (over 60 million).

The foregoing discussion has involved no consideration of the future amount of housing construction. As a matter of fact, all of the assumptions underlying the household projections have been in terms of the prospects of future demographic developments. The following statement, which was made in publishing the 1952 household projections, is equally applicable here:

> No explicit assumptions were made about the probable amount or timing of housing construction during the 1950's. There is, however, an implicit assumption that an adequate number of dwelling units will be available to shelter the households that will be formed. Certain factors in the housing situation may have a direct bearing on the number of households formed; these include changing standards of living, changing costs of housing construction, and the presence or absence of rent control. Other factors may create demand for additional housing without implying any change in number of households; these include the desire for different living quarters more suited to the needs of the family, the desire to hold more than one home for use of the family, population shifts, and other reasons for local vacancy shortages. The migration factor, which is particularly important during periods of rapid industrial expansion, tends to create local housing shortages in areas of heavy in-migration and at the same time tends to leave an oversupply of vacancies in areas of heavy out-migration. Furthermore, the supply of housing may be changed without a corresponding change in number of households. The number of dwelling units may be increased not only by new construction but also by conversion of existing structures into a larger number of dwelling units; on the other hand, the number may be decreased by demolitions and by conversion of structures into a smaller number of units or into nonresidential use. Finally, the number of dwelling units and the number of households may remain unchanged and yet there may be building activity without what is commonly regarded as housing construction; this situation is illustrated by the family that has its home extensively repaired or rehabilitated for the family's own use. In summary, the amount of needed housing construction is related to, but is not necessarily the same as, the indicated net increase in number of households.[8]

Additional factors that should be considered in preparing and using household projections are discussed in the section below on "Future trends of farm and nonfarm households" and in Appendix C.

The projected numbers of households are summarized in table 112 and figure 33, with corresponding data for census and survey dates back to

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[7] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-25, No. 78.

[8] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, No. 42, pp. 5 and 6.

1930. Both Series A and Series B projections show a lower rate of household formation during the last six years of the 1950's than during the first four years. Series A indicates an average annual addition of 722,000 households and Series B shows an average growth of 511,000 households for the 1954–1960 period, as compared with 818,000 per year for 1950 to 1954. About two-thirds of the over-all difference between the two series is attributable to the difference between the two series in the level of the increase among primary individuals and about one-third to the difference in the level of increase among primary families. The rate of increase for primary individuals between 1954 and 1960 according to the Series A projections is higher than that according to the Series B projections but not so high, however, as the actual increase (about 300,000 per year) for the period 1950 to 1954. Since most of the primary individuals are older widowed persons, one of the main questions is the extent to which the proportion of widowed persons who maintain their own homes alone will rise still higher.

TABLE **112.**—NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS: 1930 TO 1954, AND PROJECTIONS, 1960 TO 1975

Date and series	Households	Primary families	Primary indi-viduals	Average annual increase since preceding date		
				House-holds	Primary families	Primary individuals
April 1930 (census).........	29,905,000	27,547,000	2,357,000	...	...	...
April 1940 (census).........	34,949,000	31,491,000	3,458,000	504,000	394,000	110,000
April 1947 (CPS).............	39,107,000	34,964,000	4,143,000	594,000	496,000	98,000
March 1950 (CPS).............	43,554,000	38,838,000	4,716,000	1,525,000	1,328,000	196,000
April 1954 (CPS).............	46,893,000	40,961,000	5,932,000	818,000	520,000	298,000
PROJECTIONS (July 1)						
Series A:						
1960.....................	51,379,000	43,925,000	7,454,000	722,000	477,000	245,000
1965.....................	54,395,000	46,308,000	8,087,000	603,000	476,000	127,000
1970.....................	58,434,000	49,645,000	8,789,000	807,000	667,000	140,000
1975.....................	62,986,000	53,541,000	9,445,000	910,000	780,000	131,000
Series B:						
1960.....................	50,070,000	43,466,000	6,604,000	511,000	403,000	108,000
1965.....................	52,972,000	45,805,000	7,167,000	580,000	468,000	112,000
1970.....................	56,811,000	49,031,000	7,780,000	767,000	645,000	122,000
1975.....................	61,190,000	52,830,000	8,360,000	875,000	759,000	116,000

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 10, table 5; No. 16, tables 2 and 5; No. 17, tables 1, 3, 5 to 8, and 11; No. 55, table 1; No. 56, tables 1 and 4 to 7; Series P–25, No. 78, tables 2 and 3; and *1930 Census of Population*, Vol. VI, *Families*, table 4.

The implied annual gain in number of households between 1960 and 1965 is about 600,000 according to both Series A and Series B projections. The relatively low level of anticipated household formation from 1954 until 1965 is a consequence, in large part, of the fact that persons born during the low birth-rate years of the 1930's will be passing through the period of life when first marriage rates are the highest.

Between 1965 and 1970, the annual growth in number of households may be expected to rise to about the level that prevailed during the first half of the 1950's (800,000 per year) and between 1970 and 1975 it should be still higher (approximately 900,000 per year). The antici-

pated increase in the volume of household formation between the mid-1960's and the mid-1970's reflects chiefly the rise in numbers of children born during the high birth-rate years of the 1940's. The maturation of these persons into young married couples with homes of their own may be expected to cause an upturn in the annual additions of primary families after 1965. In fact, virtually the entire amount of the anticipated rise in annual household growth between 1965 and 1975 may come from additions of primary families, as indicated in table 112.

FIGURE 33.—NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE: 1930 TO 1954, AND PROJECTIONS, 1960 TO 1975
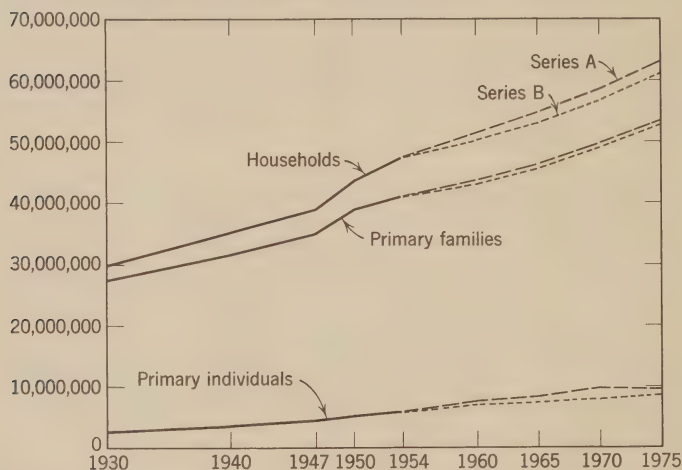
Note: Based on data in table 112.

Future trends of farm and nonfarm households. Most of the housing analysts are mainly interested in the prospects for nonfarm household formation. Certain other analysts are more interested in the outlook for farm household formation. The problem of developing separate projections for farm and nonfarm households can be approached by examining, first, the past trends in the number of farm households. During the 1940's, the number of farm households declined by a relatively small amount; hence the growth in the number of nonfarm households for the decade was almost as large as that for all households. Between 1950 and 1954, however, the number of farm households declined about 10 percent, perhaps largely because of farm-to-nonfarm migration. During these four years, the average annual increase in nonfarm households was about 964,000, as compared with 818,000 for all households.

In 1950, a change was made in the census definition of a farm, as explained in Appendix A. If an allowance is made for this change in definition, it appears that the number of farm households declined about 16 percent during the 14 years from 1940 to 1954. If it is assumed that

the number of farm households will decline further at the same rate during the 21 years from 1954 to 1975, or by 24 percent, without affecting the increase in the total number of households, the net effect would be that the 21-year increase in the total number of nonfarm households would exceed that for all households by about 1.3 million, or 8 percent.

Calculations based on the assumptions stated in the preceding paragraph show an estimated net decline of about 63,000 farm households per year from 1954 until 1975. Thus, the average annual increase in number of nonfarm households over the 21-year span would be about 829,000, according to the Series A projections, and about 744,000 according to Series B projections. These figures may be compared with average annual increases for all households of 766,000, according to Series A, and 681,000, according to Series B. The projections indicate an increase in the number of nonfarm households (excluding urban-farm households) from about 41.5 million in 1954 to 57.4 million (Series A) or 55.6 million (Series B) in 1975; the indicated decrease in farm households (including urban-farm households) is from 5.6 million in 1954 to 4.2 million in 1975.

These future trends of farm and nonfarm households are intended to be illustrative rather than definitive and have not been analyzed for intermediate years. No up-to-date projections of the farm population were available at the time of this writing, partly because the sharp drop in farm population between 1950 and 1954 has created uncertainty regarding the short-run outlook for the number of persons living on farms. If the future trends of the average size of farm and nonfarm households follow the same pattern, the farm household projections given here are consistent with a farm population in 1975 of approximately 16 million, which would represent a decline of about 6 million from the 1954 level. A change of such a magnitude does not seem unreasonable.

Some implications of the projections

Prospective changes in household composition. Some of the implications of the Series A and Series B household projections in terms of the future trend of the average population per household by age may be observed from the data in table 113 and figure 34. According to the results for both series, the average size of household may be expected to rise slightly between 1954 and 1960. If this development materializes, it will represent the only increase in size of household on record, aside from a temporary rise at the end of World War II. The upturn seems unlikely to continue after 1960 or 1965, however, unless some unforeseen development arises. According to the Series A projections, the average size of household will rise from the 1954 level of 3.34 persons to about 3.43 persons in 1965 and retain approximately that level until 1975. According to the Series B projections, a rise to about 3.46 persons per household will be reached by 1960 and will be maintained until 1965, after which a slow decline will bring the average size of household in 1975 back to approximately the 1954 level.

TABLE **113.**—AVERAGE POPULATION PER HOUSEHOLD: 1930 TO 1954, AND PROJECTIONS, 1960 TO 1975

Date and series	All ages	Under 18 years old[1]	18 years old and over[2]
April 1930 (census)................	4.01	1.42	2.59
April 1940 (census)................	3.67	1.14	2.53
April 1947 (CPS)...................	3.55	1.11	2.45
March 1950 (CPS)...................	3.37	1.06	2.31
April 1954 (CPS)...................	3.34	1.13	2.20
PROJECTIONS (July 1)			
Series A:			
1960...........................	3.39	1.20	2.19
1965...........................	3.43	1.22	2.21
1970...........................	3.44	1.21	2.22
1975...........................	3.45	1.23	2.22
Series B:			
1960...........................	3.46	1.21	2.25
1965...........................	3.45	1.18	2.27
1970...........................	3.40	1.11	2.29
1975...........................	3.33	1.04	2.29

[1] Population Series A (high fertility assumption) used with household Series A, and population Series C (low fertility assumption) used with household Series B for 1960 to 1975.

[2] Population Series A used throughout. All of the series of population projections were the same for persons born before the projections were made. Nearly all persons 18 years old and over in 1975 had been born before the projections were made, hence variations in assumptions about future fertility had little significance for this age group.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports,* Series P–20, No. 10, table 7; No. 56, tables D and 4; Series P–25, No. 78, table 1; and *1930 Census of Population,* Vol. II, *General Report,* Chapter 10, table 20.

FIGURE **34.**—AVERAGE POPULATION PER HOUSEHOLD: 1930 TO 1954, AND PROJECTIONS, 1960 TO 1975
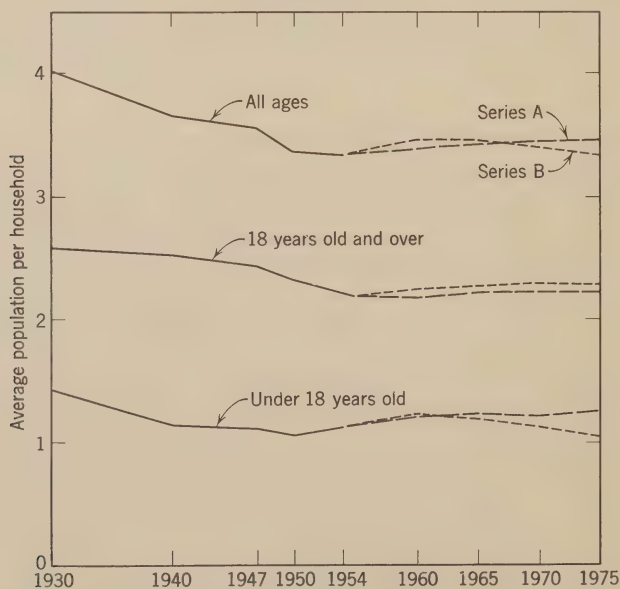
Note: Based on data in table 113.

Most of the anticipated variation in household size up to 1975 reflects prospective changes in the average numbers of children in the household. In 1930, there were about 1.42 children under 18 years of age per household. This figure declined during the following 20 years to about 1.06 in 1950, then started upward again. Both Series A and B projections imply that the figure will reach about 1.20 by 1960; Series A shows no further variation of importance, but Series B shows a gradual decline to about 1.04 children under 18 per household by 1975.

The decline in number of children per household during the 1930's and 1940's, as well as the changes after 1950, reflect mainly the fluctuations observed or anticipated in the cumulative numbers of births during the 18 years preceding each of these dates. The trend in children per household is also affected by the extent to which the adult population forms separate households. For example, although the accumulated number of births for the 18 years before 1950 was only 8.5 percent greater than it was for the 18 years before 1940, the number of households increased between 1940 and 1950 by 24.6 percent. If these percentages had been about the same, the average number of children per household would have likewise been about the same in 1950 as in 1940. However, since the proportionate increase in number of households was much greater, the average number of children under 18 years old per household decreased during the 1940's despite the well-known "baby boom" of that period.

The number of adults per household decreased moderately during the 1930's but dropped sharply between 1940 and 1954. According to the Series A projections, the average number of persons 18 years old and over per household will remain essentially unchanged from 1954 until 1975, and according to Series B, it will rise very slowly from about 2.20 in 1954 to about 2.29 in 1975. If the Series A household projections had been based on more optimistic assumptions about the future growth in the number of households, the average number of persons 18 years old and over per household would have shown a decline in future years and would have therefore offset the anticipated rise in the number of children under 18 years old per household.

Changes in the adult population per household may arise from variations in numerous factors, some of which can be more readily documented than others. (1) For decades, the aging of the population has tended to increase the proportion of small households comprising older couples (or surviving individuals) whose children have left home. (2) During the 1930's, the amount of "doubling up" among married couples increased because of the unfavorable economic conditions; it rose even higher during the housing shortage after World War II when the marriage rate was unusually high, then fell rapidly as the supply of housing increased. (3) Most of the young married couples who established homes of their own during the late 1940's still had small households by 1950 and, in addition, their departure from their parental homes decreased the size of

their parents' households. (4) The increasing benefits from public and private old age (group) security measures and the increasing volume of personally financed endowments made it financially possible for more and more of the older people to continue the maintenance of separate homes instead of sharing the living quarters of their children. This is believed to have been another factor in the shrinkage of the number of adults per household. (5) Improved levels of living, meantime, apparently more often took the form of providing greater independence and privacy in home life, as expressed by more young couples living apart from their parents and by more parents keeping their own homes into old age. (6) Since the average number of adults per household is computed on the basis of adults who live in households, fluctuations in the strength of the Armed Forces have a direct bearing upon this average. The increase in the number of persons living away from their homes on military duty from about a million in 1950 to about 2½ million in 1954 accounts for about one-third of the decline in the average number of adults per household during this period. In the preparation of the Series A and Series B household projections, it was assumed that the strength of the Armed Forces in 1954 (3.4 million) and also its distribution between household members and others would continue unchanged between 1954 and 1975. An increase in the strength of the Armed Forces would tend to lower the number of households and a decrease in the Armed Forces would tend to raise the number of households.

Future trends of households by type. Heads of primary families constitute the great majority (about nine-tenths) of all heads of households; the remaining one-tenth are primary individuals. In turn, about nine-tenths of all primary families are "husband-wife" families, that is, are maintained by a married couple. Since husband-wife primary families represent such a large proportion of all households, the trend of the growth in number of households is ordinarily determined very largely by the increase in this type of household. However, as may be seen by the figures in table 114, the average annual increase in the number of husband-wife primary families between 1950 and 1954 (441,000) was only about one-half of the total household increase per year (818,000).

TABLE **114.**—NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE: 1947, 1950, AND 1954

Type of household	Number of households			Average annual increase	
	April 1947	March 1950	April 1954	1947 to 1950	1950 to 1954
All households............	39,107,000	43,554,000	46,893,000	1,525,000	818,000
Primary families...............	34,964,000	38,838,000	40,961,000	1,328,000	520,000
Husband-wife...............	30,612,000	34,075,000	35,875,000	1,187,000	441,000
Other male head............	1,129,000	1,169,000	1,326,000	14,000	38,000
Female head................	3,223,000	3,594,000	3,760,000	127,000	41,000
Primary individuals............	4,143,000	4,716,000	5,932,000	196,000	298,000
Male......................	1,388,000	1,668,000	1,904,000	96,000	58,000
Female....................	2,755,000	3,048,000	4,028,000	100,000	240,000

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 55, tables 1 and 2.

Although only one-tenth of the heads of households were primary indi-
viduals, more than one-third of the increase in households between 1950
and 1954 was accounted for by growth in number of primary individuals.
The rapid increase in the number of primary individuals perhaps resulted
mainly from the decline in the number of married couples who were living
as subfamilies. For example, if a household in 1950 had a widow as the
head and her daughter and son-in-law were the only other members, and
if the couple established a household of their own the following year, the
widow would have changed her status from a head of a primary family to
a primary individual. In addition, some of the increase in the number
of women living as primary individuals during this period probably arose
from the expansion of the Armed Forces; many married women whose
husbands were in the Armed Forces in 1954 but not in 1950 maintained
households alone and hence were classified as primary individuals.

In future years, the relative importance of the growth in number of
primary individuals seems likely to diminish, despite the large proportion
of older persons not in this status and the expected continuation of the aging
of the population. The extent of the increase in number of primary indi-
viduals during the balance of the 1950's will depend heavily on how many
more women become primary individuals (table 115). The accelerated
growth pattern for this type of unit may have already neared the end; in
any event, it will certainly diminish long before all adults not living with
a spouse become household heads. If and when the saturation point is
reached, the annual increments of households from this source should be
about 150,000 smaller than they were during the early 1950's. There-
after, or until the growth patterns change, the fluctuations in household
growth should be associated more directly with variations in the number
of newly formed husband-wife households. Thus, the figures in table 115
for all periods after 1954 show about two-thirds of the household increase
arising from growth in the number of husband-wife households.

TABLE **115.**—AVERAGE ANNUAL INCREASE IN NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS: 1947 TO 1954,
AND PROJECTIONS, 1954 TO 1975

[Numbers in thousands. Minus sign (−) denotes decrease]

Type of household	1947 to 1950	1950 to 1954	Series A projections				Series B projections			
			1954 to 1960	1960 to 1965	1965 to 1970	1970 to 1975	1954 to 1960	1960 to 1965	1965 to 1970	1970 to 1975
All households.......	1,525	818	722	603	807	910	511	580	767	875
Primary families.........	1,328	520	477	476	667	780	403	468	645	759
Husband-wife...........	1,187	441	438	412	595	697	323	395	568	675
Other male head........	14	38	-12	12	15	20	9	15	17	21
Female head............	127	41	51	52	57	63	71	58	60	63
Primary individuals......	196	298	245	127	140	131	108	112	122	116
Male...................	96	58	47	27	36	37	19	25	31	33
Female.................	100	240	198	100	104	94	89	87	91	83

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 10, table
5; No. 16, tables 2 and 5; No. 17, tables 1, 3, 5 to 8, and 11; No. 55, table 1; No. 56, tables 1 and 4 to 7;
and Series P–25, No. 78, tables 2 and 3.

Gross change in number of households

In the foregoing sections, an attempt has been made to throw light on the *net increase* in the number of households that may be expected under specified conditions during the next two decades. A quite different and more difficult undertaking would be to project the *gross change* in the number of such units. The components of change in the number of households in a given year are many: the number of marriages during the year, the number of these marriages which result in the establishment of a new household or in the combination of two previously existing households during the year, and the number of marriages of prior years which result in the establishment or the disestablishment of a household during the year in question; likewise, the number of divorces resulting in the subtraction or addition of a household, the number of deaths resulting in the dissolution of a household (or in changing the head from, say, the husband to his widow, or from the father to the son or son-in-law); the number of unmarried persons not included above who establish a household or dissolve one during the year; and so on.

For some purposes, however, it is useful to develop approximations of the gross change in number of households. For instance, one may wish to reconcile the vital statistics on marriages, divorces, and deaths for a given period with the change in number of households or married couples during the same period. Such a project is seldom carried out, because the difficulties of measurement are great and the usefulness of the results is limited. The complexities of the problem and gaps in the data may lead one to assemble the more readily available components of household increase and to obtain the residual components as one group by subtraction. Even the "known" part involves estimation in order to change some series from calendar years to other periods; the household increase is subject to sampling variation; etc. Because of such problems, the vital statistics and census data usually agree at best in only an approximate way.

The figures in table 116 show how the increase in the number of married couples and the number of households between April 1953 and April 1954 can be approximately reconciled with the vital statistics data for the same period. The difference between the two figures for the net increase in number of married couples, as well as the difference between the two figures for the net increase in number of households, could be easily accounted for by sampling variability alone. Nonetheless, there are other reasons for disagreement between the two sets of figures. For instance, it is unknown how many of the couples obtaining a divorce during the year were living together at the start of the year and whether the husband and wife obtaining a divorce maintained one household, two households, or no household at the start of the year; the effect of immigration and emigration on the vital statistics data is not taken directly into account; the vital statistics data cannot throw light on the effect of the death of a household head on the continuance of the household; nor can such

data give any indication of the gross gains or losses in the number of households that occurred in the absence of any marriage, divorce, or death (such as the establishment of a new household by a young single woman who moved to a city and rented an apartment for the first time); and numerous other factors involved in the gross change cannot be readily estimated by the use of either vital statistics or census data. Obviously, some of these factors would tend to increase, and others decrease, the differences between the pairs of net increase figures shown in the table. All that can be stated with assurance, therefore, is that the combined effect of the several unitemized factors—plus errors and biases in the data— account for the observed differences.

Because of the many obstacles encountered in the preparation of estimates of gross changes in number of households, no projections of such changes have been undertaken. For only one element in the gross change, namely, the number of marriages, projections have been prepared. The results are presented in the following chapter.

TABLE **116.**—GROSS AND NET CHANGES IN NUMBER OF MARRIED COUPLES AND HOUSEHOLDS: APRIL 1953 TO APRIL 1954

Subject	Gains	Losses	Net increase
MARRIED COUPLES			
Vital statistics:			
Number of marriages.....................	1,538,000	...	...
Number of divorces (est.)...............	...	392,000	...
Number of deaths among married persons with spouse present....................	...	833,000	...
Net increase............................	...	...	313,000
Census statistics: Net increase..........	...	...	240,000
HOUSEHOLDS			
Vital statistics:			
Number of marriages.....................	1,538,000	...	...
Decrease in doubled couples.............	75,000	...	...
Number of divorces......................	...	392,000	...
Number of deaths among household heads..	...	814,000	...
Net increase............................	...	...	407,000
Census statistics: Net increase..........	...	...	559,000

Source: Derived from National Office of Vital Statistics, *Monthly Vital Statistics Report,* Vol. 2 and 3 (various numbers); *Vital Statistics—Special Reports,* Vol. 41, No. 1, tables 2 and 3; U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports,* Series P–20, No. 55, table 2; and No. 56, tables 1 and 5.

CHAPTER 10

FUTURE FAMILY FORMATION

Projections of family units by type

Most of the demand for projections in the field of family statistics has centered around projections of the number of households. There has also been interest, however, in the prospects for the future growth of the numbers of families, married couples, and subfamilies. Data on these units throw light on the potential number of family units that may establish, or continue to maintain, separate households by certain dates in the future. Supplementary information also permits analysis of anticipated future trends in the number of secondary individuals and in the age composition of family members.

Background information. There can obviously be little difference between the growth patterns of primary families, discussed in Chapter 9, and those for all families, including secondary families, because primary families constituted 98 or 99 percent of all families from 1940 to 1954. The number of secondary families rose sharply after World War II then fell precipitously. The number of subfamilies likewise rose and fell during this period (table 117). (See also Chapter 2, table 32.) In the early postwar period, millions of men returned to civilian life and married, but the housing shortage was so acute that hundreds of thousands of the newly married couples lived temporarily with their relatives as subfamilies or with nonrelatives as secondary families. The number of secondary families rose from 675,000 in 1940 to a high point of about 830,000 in 1947 then fell to only 241,000 in 1954, or less than one-third the 1947 number. Although the number of subfamilies rose 1 million between 1940 and 1947, it fell to the 1940 level again by 1954. Because the number of families had risen considerably in the meantime, however, the ratio of subfamilies to families was lower by one-third in 1954 than it had been in 1947.

A comparison of the figures for secondary families with those on subfamilies shows that throughout the war and postwar period secondary families constituted a steadily declining proportion of the two types of doubled-up family groups combined. By 1954, very few married couples rented one or two rooms from nonrelatives and took all meals outside the home or with the nonrelatives with whom they lived. The relatively small amount of doubling in 1954 occurred largely among couples living with

relatives. Many of the rooms in lodginghouses and many of the spare sleeping rooms in ordinary homes apparently were converted into separate dwelling units by the installation of cooking facilities. Such conversions provided living quarters for still more new households and reduced the living quarters for use by lodgers.

TABLE **117.**—NUMBER OF FAMILIES, SUBFAMILIES, MARRIED COUPLES, AND UNRELATED
INDIVIDUALS: 1940 TO 1954

Subject	April 1940	April 1947	March 1950	April 1954
Families............................	32,166,000	35,794,000	39,303,000	41,202,000
Primary...........................	31,491,000	34,964,000	38,838,000	40,961,000
Secondary.........................	675,000	830,000	465,000	241,000
Percent.....................	2.1	2.3	1.2	0.6
Subfamilies........................	2,062,000	3,123,000	2,402,000	2,107,000
Husband-wife......................	1,546,000	2,332,000	1,651,000	1,305,000
Parent-child......................	516,000	791,000	751,000	802,000
Percent.....................	25.0	25.3	31.3	38.1
Married couples....................	28,517,000	33,543,000	36,091,000	37,346,000
With own household................	26,571,000	30,612,000	34,075,000	35,875,000
Without own household............	1,946,000	2,931,000	2,016,000	1,471,000
Percent.....................	6.8	8.7	5.6	3.9
Unrelated individuals..............	9,277,000	8,491,000	9,136;000	9,700,000
Primary...........................	3,458,000	4,143,000	4,716,000	5,932,000
Secondary.........................	5,819,000	4,348,000	4,420,000	3,768,000
Percent.....................	62.7	51.2	48.4	38.8

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 55, tables 1 and 2; and No. 68, table 4.

Changes in the number of married couples without their own households constitute the chief variable element in the doubling of family units. Of the doubled-up family units that are not married couples, almost all are parent-child subfamilies; the heads of most of these groups are women with broken marriages who have taken their children and moved in with their parents. The number of these parent-child groups remained virtually unchanged between 1947 and 1954.

From 1940 to 1954, the number of primary individuals increased while the number of secondary individuals in the civilian population decreased. (Primary individuals are heads of households not living with relatives; secondary individuals are usually lodgers or resident employees—persons living in households but not related to the head or other members.) The increase in primary individuals was explained in Chapter 9. The decrease in secondary individuals resulted largely from the increase in marriage rates, which drew them into families, and from the expansion of the Armed Forces, which took many out of the civilian population. The ratio of primary to secondary individuals in the civilian population shifted from roughly a 40–60 ratio in 1940 to a 60–40 ratio in 1954.

Projections prepared in 1955. To give some indication of the future numbers of families and related types of units, a set of illustrative projections was developed for 1960, 1965, 1970, and 1975 (table 118 and figure 35). These projections rested on the basic assumption that the proportion of persons in each subclass—by age, marital status, and family

status—would be the same in the future as it was in 1954. The only variables, therefore, were the changing size and age composition of the adult population. Thus, the projections in table 118 were based on the same type of assumption as the Series B household projections, and are accordingly designated as Series B projections.[1]

Table **118.**—Number of Households, Families, Subfamilies, Married Couples, and Unrelated Individuals: 1954, and Series B Projections, 1960 to 1975

Subject	April 1954	Series B projections (July 1)				Percent increase, 1954 to 1975
		1960	1965	1970	1975	
Households................	46,893,000	50,070,000	52,972,000	56,811,000	61,190,000	30.5
Families..................	41,202,000	43,729,000	46,087,000	49,337,000	53,151,000	29.0
Primary................	40,961,000	43,466,000	45,805,000	49,031,000	52,830,000	29.0
Secondary..............	241,000	263,000	282,000	306,000	321,000	33.2
Percent.............	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.6	...
Subfamilies..............	2,107,000	2,200,000	2,402,000	2,683,000	2,940,000	39.5
Husband-wife...........	1,305,000	1,367,000	1,498,000	1,669,000	1,827,000	40.0
Parent-child...........	802,000	833,000	904,000	1,014,000	1,113,000	38.8
Percent.............	38.1	37.9	37.6	37.8	37.9	...
Married couples..........	37,346,000	39,433,000	41,553,000	44,577,000	48,122,000	28.9
With own household......	35,875,000	37,880,000	39,855,000	42,693,000	46,068,000	28.4
Without own household...	1,471,000	1,553,000	1,698,000	1,884,000	2,054,000	39.6
Percent.............	3.9	3.9	4.1	4.2	4.3	...
Unrelated individuals.....	9,700,000	10,689,000	11,614,000	12,623,000	13,536,000	39.5
Primary................	5,932,000	6,604,000	7,167,000	7,780,000	8,360,000	40.9
Secondary..............	3,768,000	4,085,000	4,447,000	4,843,000	5,176,000	37.4
Percent.............	38.8	38.2	38.3	38.4	38.2	...

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports,* Series P–20, No. 10, table 5; No. 16, tables 2 and 5; No. 17, tables 1, 3, 5 to 8, and 11; No. 55, table 1; No. 56, tables 1 and 4 to 7; and Series P–25, No. 78, tables 2 and 3.

The projected increase of about 30 percent in the number of households between 1954 and 1975, shown in the last column of table 118, may be used as a standard in analyzing implied future growth in the other types of units. Because the age distributions of heads of households, heads of primary families, and husbands in married couples with their own households are very similar and to a large extent refer to the same persons, all these types of units should, and do, have about the same indicated amount of increase for the 21-year period. By contrast, the heads of other types of units (secondary families, subfamilies, and married couples without their own households), who tend to be from a few years to about 15 years younger than household heads, have an indicated growth that is generally several percentage points higher. The ranks of these groups will be swollen during the next two decades by the large numbers of persons who were in their teens or younger in 1954. Again, unrelated individuals, with a median age about 10 years above that of household heads, are likely

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[1] As indicated in Chapter 9, Series A projections of households, showing a higher rate of increase than Series B projections for the balance of the 1950's, were also prepared. For several reasons, Series A projections were not made uniformly for the other types of units shown in table 118. The main reason was to keep this phase of the treatment of projections to a minimum.

FIGURE 35.—FAMILIES AND OTHER HOUSEHOLD UNITS: 1940 TO 1954, AND PROJECTIONS, 1960 TO 1975
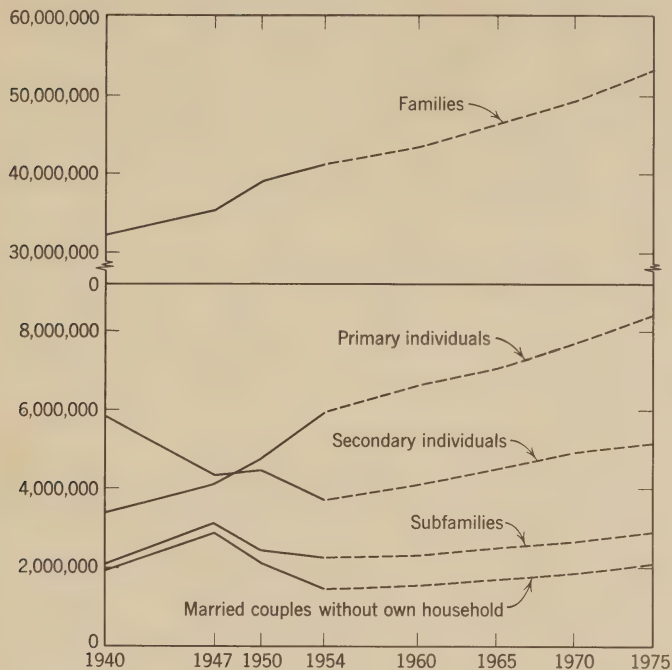
Note: Based on data in tables 117 and 118.

to increase relatively rapidly in the next 20 years, because of the rapid growth expected in the number of older persons.

For married couples, Series A projections (corresponding to the Series A projections of households) were prepared (table 119). The number of doubled couples in 1960 is significantly lower (by about 400,000) in these projections than it is in the Series B projections, because an increasing rate of household formation until 1960 was assumed for Series A whereas a stable rate was assumed for Series B. After 1960, the two series diverge more gradually, and in 1975 they are nearly 600,000 apart. The projected low point of 1,150,000 married couples without their own households in 1960, according to the Series A projections, represents only 2.9 percent of all married couples and is probably about as low as the figure has any reasonable prospect of falling.

Probably the irreducible minimum of married couples who would not maintain separate households under conditions likely to prevail in this country is close to 1 million. An estimate of similar magnitude was prepared by the Bureau of the Census on the basis of survey data collected by the Bureau for the National Housing Agency in 1946, when the number

of married couples was about 20 percent smaller than it is likely to be in 1960, but when the outlook for the improvement of housing conditions was less favorable than it was in the mid-1950's.[2] There will always be couples who marry before they can afford to establish and equip separate households, and older couples who move in with one of their sons or daughters because they can be more conveniently cared for or can render more assistance in that way. The number of such couples can probably be reduced somewhat below the level of about 1.3 million in 1955, but the limit is likely somewhere near 1 million.

TABLE 119.—NUMBER OF MARRIED COUPLES: 1954, AND PROJECTIONS, 1960 TO 1975

Date and series	All married couples	With own household	Without own household	
			Number	Percent
April 1954......................	37,346,000	35,875,000	1,471,000	3.9
PROJECTIONS (July 1)				
Series A:				
1960........................	39,746,000	38,596,000	1,150,000	2.9
1965........................	41,909,000	40,655,000	1,254,000	3.0
1970........................	44,995,000	43,630,000	1,365,000	3.0
1975........................	48,587,000	47,113,000	1,474,000	3.0
Increase, 1954 to 1975........	11,241,000	11,238,000	3,000	...
Series B:				
1960........................	39,433,000	37,880,000	1,553,000	3.9
1965........................	41,553,000	39,855,000	1,698,000	4.1
1970........................	44,577,000	42,693,000	1,884,000	4.2
1975........................	48,122,000	46,068,000	2,054,000	4.3
Increase, 1954 to 1975........	10,776,000	10,193,000	583,000	...

Source: Same as table 118.

Prospective changes in family composition. The average size of family will probably increase gradually from 1954 until at least 1965 and then either level off, if the high fertility rates of the early 1950's continue, or return to about the 1954 size of family, if fertility rates decline gradually until 1975 (table 120).[3] The explanation of changes in population per family is, in most respects, the same as the explanation given in Chapter 9 for changes in population per household. (The average population per family exceeds the average population per household, largely because families must comprise at least two related persons, whereas households may consist of persons living alone.)

[2] National Housing Agency, Statistical Bulletin No. 7, "A National Survey of Veterans' Housing Plans and Present Accommodations as of June 1946," November 1946.
[3] The sources of the figures in table 120 for 1960 to 1975 are as follows: Series B projections of families were used as bases for all of the averages. Series A projections of population 18 years old and over were used in the numerators to compute the average number of members 18 and over. Series A projections of population under 18 years old were used in the numerators to compute the average number of members under 18 designated as Series B–1; Series C projections of population under 18 years old were used in the numerators to compute the average number of members under 18 designated as Series B–2. Thus, the Series B–2 projections shown in table 120 are comparable with the Series B projections of population per household, but the Series B–1 projections in table 120 are not strictly comparable with the Series A projections of population per household.

TABLE **120.**—AVERAGE POPULATION PER FAMILY: 1940 TO 1954, AND PROJECTIONS, 1960 TO 1975

Date and series	All ages	Under 18 years old	18 years old and over
April 1940 (census)................	3.76	1.24	2.52
March 1950 (CPS)....................	3.54	1.17	2.37
April 1954 (CPS)...................	3.59	1.28	2.31
PROJECTIONS (July 1)			
Series B-1:[1]			
1960.........................	3.73	1.34	2.38
1965.........................	3.79	1.36	2.43
1970.........................	3.81	1.35	2.46
1975.........................	3.84	1.38	2.46
Series B-2:[1]			
1960.........................	3.70	1.31	2.38
1965.........................	3.71	1.28	2.43
1970.........................	3.66	1.19	2.46
1975.........................	3.58	1.12	2.46

[1] For explanation of series, see text, footnote 3.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 56, tables D and 4; and Series P–25, No. 78, table 1.

A turning point in the number of children per family, and per household, apparently occurred about 1950; a turning point in the number of adults per family, and per household, may also occur during the 1950's. The rise in number of children per family after the turning point may reach about 0.11 children, and the rise in number of adults per family after the turning point may reach about 0.17 persons, according to the Series B projections. If Series A projections of the number of families had been prepared, they probably would have shown a leveling off in the number of adults per family after 1960 like that for the number of adults per household.

In conclusion, the projections point to the continuation for a decade or more of an important new trend that has apparently already begun in this country, namely, a rising average population per family. Such a development would have numerous implications, only a few of which will be enumerated here. Since the increasing number of young family members is partly responsible for the anticipated continuation of the increase in average number of persons per family, the new trend will probably result in more of the family's activities being centered around the social life of the children. The span of time during which there are children in the home may increase by a year or so. The housing requirements for the average family may be a little greater and the nature of family expenditures may be affected in numerous other ways. For example, more savings for the education of children beyond the high school level may be required. If current living standards are to improve simultaneously, the real income levels of the family will also have to expand. Enlarged demand for goods and services created by the growing population should, in turn, help to make this improvement possible.

Projections of the number of marriages

Earlier projections. During World War II, the Bureau of the Census analyzed past trends in the number of marriages to determine the extent of the apparent marriage "surplus" that had developed by 1944 and to develop a guide for projecting the number of marriages.[4] The criterion against which the actual number of marriages for 1915 to 1944 was compared was the "normal" or expected number of marriages, computed from average annual total marriage rates (not differentiating between first marriages and remarriages) for women by age, for the period 1920 to 1939.[5] The two sets of figures on the number of marriages are shown in table 121 for selected periods from 1910 to 1954.

TABLE **121.**—ACTUAL AND EXPECTED NUMBERS OF MARRIAGES: SELECTED PERIODS, 1910 TO 1954

Year or period	Actual number of marriages	Expected number of marriages[1]	Actual minus expected[2]	Year or period	Actual number of marriages	Expected number of marriages[1]	Actual minus expected[2]
1910[3]	934,000	968,000	-34,000	1915 to 1919....	5,378,000	5,251,000	127,000
1920[3]	1,196,000	1,060,000	136,000	1920 to 1924....	5,987,000	5,495,000	492,000
1930[3]	1,140,000	1,241,000	-101,000	1925 to 1929....	6,007,000	5,935,000	72,000
1940[3]	1,565,000	1,350,000	215,000	1930 to 1934....	5,570,000	6,348,000	-778,000
1944[3]	1,544,000	1,376,000	168,000	1935 to 1939....	6,828,000	6,612,000	216,000
1947[3]	2,031,000	1,363,000	668,000	1940 to 1944....	8,024,000	6,839,000	1,185,000
1950[3]	1,614,000	1,370,000	244,000	1945 to 1949....	9,287,000	6,807,000	2,480,000
1954[3]	1,511,000	1,346,000	165,000	1950 to 1954....	7,777,000	6,763,000	1,014,000

[1] Based on average annual marriage rates for women by age, 1920 to 1939, applied to estimated female population by age.

[2] Minus sign (—) denotes fewer marriages than expected.

[3] Three-year average, centered on specified year.

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Population*, Series PM–1, No. 3; *Current Population Reports*, Series P–25, No. 98, table 3; National Office of Vital Statistics, *Monthly Vital Statistics Reports*, Vol. 2, No. 13, table B; Vol. 3, No. 12, p. 1; *Vital Statistics of the United States*, 1950, Vol. I, table 5.01; and *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 40, No. 3, table A.

The over-all total numbers of actual and expected marriages are equal for the 20-year period from 1920 to 1939, by design. From 1940 to 1954, the actual numbers ran consistently ahead of the expected numbers of marriages. For the years 1940 to 1944, the excess over the expected number was 1.2 million; for the years 1945 to 1949, it was 2.5 million, or about twice as great; and for the period 1950 to 1954, the actual number exceeded the expected number by about 1.0 million. Thus, the 1920–1939 standard for the expected number of marriages had been exceeded by 4.7 million in 15 years; this is equivalent to the expected number of marriages for about 3½ years, on the basis of the same standard.

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[4] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Population*, Series PM–1, No. 3.

[5] The "normal" numbers of marriages differ somewhat from a similar series for the period 1910 to 1941 prepared by Warren S. Thompson and P. K. Whelpton, who used 1925 to 1929 rates as normal and computed "normal" estimates on the basis of women 17 to 29 years old. See National Resources Planning Board, *Estimates of Future Population of the United States*, Government Printing Office, Washington, D. C., 1943, table B–9, p. 19.

This gap between the actual and expected numbers of marriages is subject to alternative interpretations. If the "normal" marriage rates for the period 1920 to 1939 are regarded as an acceptable criterion, the deficit of about 560,000 marriages during the 1930's should probably be considered as a negative compensation for the excess of about 560,000 marriages during the 1920's; it would follow, then, that the 4.7 million excess between 1940 and 1954 represented a "borrowing" from the future numbers of marriages. Even if a part of the excess since 1940 represented a "making up" for the shortage during the 1930's, as may well have been the case, it is still probable that only a small proportion of the excess between 1940 and 1954 can be explained in this way.

A more defensible hypothesis seems to be that there was a change in the pattern of marriage and that the "normal" or expected number of marriages per year became more or less stabilized on a plateau above the former level. Perhaps the sharp increase in divorce and subsequent remarriage during the 1940's furnishes a partial explanation for the new pattern. There were about 400,000 divorces per year during the 15 years from 1940 to 1954, as compared with about 200,000 per year between 1920 and 1939. If allowances are made for the growth in the population base and for the fact that some divorced persons do not remarry, the rise in the number of divorces may account for about 100,000 more remarriages per year after 1940 than would have been expected on the 1920–1939 basis, or about 1.5 million for the period 1940 to 1954.

If as many as 500,000 of the marriages during the 1940's represented compensations for deferred marriages of the 1930's, and if 1.5 million of the marriages between 1940 and 1954 represented remarriages of divorced persons above the number expected on the 1920–1939 basis, there still remains an excess of 2.7 million marriages between 1940 and 1954 to be accounted for. Perhaps 1.7 million of the residual excess marriages can be accounted for by the decline of about one year in the median age at marriage, since that is about the average number of marriages per year between 1940 and 1954. This still leaves about 1 million excess marriages since 1940 to be attributed to an increase in the number of remarriages of widowed persons and to other factors. The conclusion appears to be warranted, therefore, that a new pattern of expectancy for the number of marriages per year, implying higher marriage rates than those of a few decades ago, has been established. An analysis of the age-standardized declines in the proportions single and widowed, and of complementary increases in the proportion married, supports this conclusion.[6]

Projections prepared in 1955. In the search for a basis on which to prepare a new series of marriage projections, it was found to be much easier to demonstrate that prevailing marriage rates were well above the former rates than it was to determine the most defensible set of expected

[6] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Statistical Abstract of the United States: 1954*, table 45. Also, see Chapter 6, table 67.

rates to use in making projections of the future numbers of marriages. Of the limited number of alternatives available for consideration, the one that seemed best adapted to the purpose was a set of first marriage and remarriage rates by age which was derived from a study sponsored jointly by the National Office of Vital Statistics and the Bureau of the Census. The study was based on data collected by the Bureau in its Current Population Survey of April 1953 on persons who married between January 1950 and April 1953. The results were published by the National Office of Vital Statistics.[7]

The first marriage and remarriage rates for 1950 to 1953 shown in table 122 were used in projecting the number of marriages to 1975. Since it was assumed that there would be no further change in marriage rates after the current period (1950–1953), the projections are analogous to the Series B household and family projections. First marriage rates were applied to the projected single female population and remarriage rates were applied to the projected widowed and divorced female population.[8] The results were combined to obtain the total number of marriages for future years based on the 1950–1953 data. From the methodological viewpoint, these results constituted an improvement over those obtained by use of the 1920–1939 total marriage rates, which were applied to the entire female population for future years, regardless of the fact that a large proportion in most of the age groups would have already married. Moreover, the rates based on data for 1920 to 1939 were originally prepared for the purpose of obtaining approximately the correct total number of marriages for women of all ages, and not to provide accurate estimates of the numbers of marriages for each age of woman; this fact reduces the importance which should be attached to the differences between the total marriage rates for specified age groups from the two sources.

The illustrative projections based on average annual first marriage and remarriage rates for 1950 to 1953, and those based on average annual total marriage rates for 1920 to 1939, are shown in table 123 for every fifth year from 1960 to 1975. These projections, as well as actual and expected numbers of marriages for selected dates from 1930 to 1954 from table 121, are shown graphically in figure 36.

If the marriage rates remain near the level for the period 1950 to 1953, the annual number of marriages will fall slightly between 1955 and 1960, but will rise rapidly during the 1960's, then a little more between 1970 and 1975. The pattern of change in the projected number of marriages

[7] National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 39, No. 3. For an analysis and evaluation of selected data collected in this survey, see Hugh Carter, Paul C. Glick, and Sarah Lewit, "Some Demographic Characteristics of Recently Married Persons: Comparisons of Registration Data and Sample Survey Data," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 20, No. 2, April 1955, pp. 165–172.

[8] The population figures were the Series A projections; the percent distribution by marital status within each age group of women in 1954 was applied to the Series A population projections for future dates in order to obtain projected numbers of single women and widowed and divorced women.

from 1960 to 1975 resembles the pattern of change in the projected female population of various relevant age groups, such as 20 to 24 years, 15 to 29 years, and 20 to 29 years, but it resembles most closely the pattern of change for women 20 to 24 years of age.

TABLE **122.**—MARRIAGE RATES: 1920 TO 1939 AND 1950 TO 1953

[Rate not shown where base is less than 200,000]

Age of woman	Total marriage rates,[1] 1920 to 1939	Marriage rates[1] for 1950 to 1953		
		Total marriage rates	First marriage rates	Remarriage rates
15 to 19 years......................	50	105	103	...
20 to 24 years......................	99	91	220	456
25 to 29 years......................	42	35	139	318
30 to 34 years......................	19	15	78	152
35 to 44 years......................	9	12	43	84
45 to 54 years......................	4	6	7	28
55 years and over...................	2	2	2	6

[1] Total marriage rates are based on the estimated number of marriages per year per 1,000 women of specified age, including married women. First marriage rates are based on the estimated number of marriages per year per 1,000 single women of specified age; remarriage rates are based, similarly, on widowed and divorced women. Rates for 1950 to 1953 were for use with projected population to obtain projections of marriages for future years. These rates do not involve use of marriages during preceding year, as do those in Chapter 7; marriages during preceding year were obviously unavailable for future years.

Source: U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Population*, Series PM–1, No. 3; *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 33, table 1; No. 38, table 5; No. 44, table 1; and No. 50, table 1; and National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics—Special Reports*, Vol. 39, No. 3, table 5.

TABLE **123.**—PROJECTIONS OF THE NUMBER OF MARRIAGES FOR 1960 TO 1975, BASED ON RATES FOR 1920 TO 1939 AND FOR 1950 TO 1953

Year	Projections of marriages, based on 1920-1939 rates	Projections of marriages, based on 1950-1953 rates		
		Total marriages	First marriages	Remarriages
1960........................	1,397,000	1,437,000	1,127,000	310,000
1965........................	1,601,000	1,689,000	1,358,000	331,000
1970........................	1,871,000	1,931,000	1,570,000	361,000
1975........................	2,050,000	2,059,000	1,662,000	397,000

Source: Same as table 122; also, U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 56, table 1; and Series P–25, No. 78, table 3.

Because of the anticipated increase in the population reaching marriageable age, the rise in the number of first marriages between 1960 and 1975 may be proportionately twice as fast as that for remarriages. If the divorce rate should resume its historical upward trend, the number of remarriages may increase more rapidly than the figures in table 123 indicate, unless, of course, counteracting changes develop. The Series A population projections used in preparing the marriage projections allow for further declines in death rates. A comparison of projected numbers of marriages based on the current (1950–1953) level of marriage rates with corresponding numbers based on earlier (1920–1939) marriage rates shows that the former are consistently a little higher.

FIGURE **36.**—ACTUAL AND EXPECTED MARRIAGES, 1930 TO 1955, AND PROJECTIONS, 1960 TO 1975
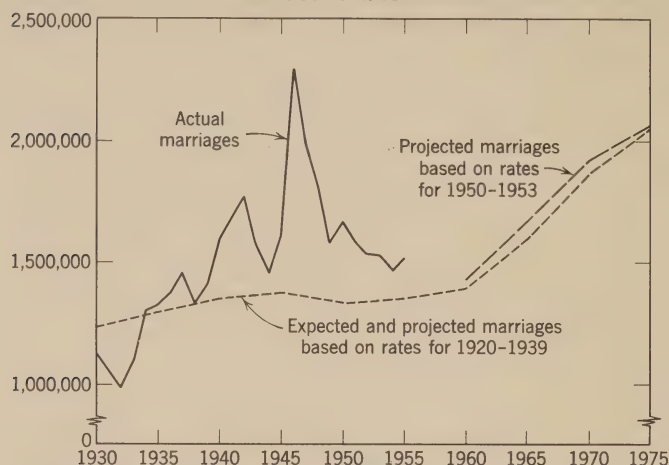
Note: Based on data from same sources as tables 121 and 123.

Marriage projections and projections of household increase.
In the absence of current statistics on the number of households in a local area, the net increase in that number is sometimes estimated from the number of marriages and other data.   But, since the increase in number of households in a given year depends only in part on the number of marriages during that year, the ratio of the number of marriages to the increase in the number of households may vary considerably from time to time, as the figures in table 124 indicate.[9]   All of the ratios are affected by trends in doubling and those involving all households are also affected by the increase in the number of households other than husband-wife households. The ratios decline gradually between 1960 and 1975.   This means that the anticipated rise in the volume of marriages after 1960 is likely to constitute a factor of growing importance in determining the net increase in number of households during the 1960's and early 1970's.

These observations indicate that the number of marriages is likely to bear a stable relationship to the increase in the total number of households year after year only if other sources of household growth are not undergoing a significant change.

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[9] See also Chapter 9, table 116.   The number of marriages in a given year may be more closely related to the gross increase, than to the net increase, in the number of households.

TABLE **124.**—RATIO OF NUMBER OF MARRIAGES TO NET INCREASE IN NUMBER OF
HOUSEHOLDS: 1950 AND 1954, AND PROJECTIONS, 1960 TO 1975

Year	Number of marriages	Net increase in number of households		Ratio of marriages to net increase in households	
		All households	Husband-wife households	All households	Husband-wife households
1950	1,667,000	1,117,000	407,000	1.49	4.10
1954	1,476,000	797,000	369,000	1.85	4.00
PROJECTIONS[1]					
1960	1,437,000	542,000	356,000	2.65	4.04
1965	1,689,000	674,000	482,000	2.51	3.50
1970	1,931,000	821,000	622,000	2.35	3.10
1975	2,059,000	875,000	675,000	2.35	3.05

[1] Marriages based on marriage rates for 1950 to 1953 and households based on Series B. Annual increases in number of households based on weighted averages of annual increases shown in table 115 of Chapter 9.

Source: Tables 114 and 115 of Chapter 9 and table 123 of Chapter 10; also, derived, in part, from National Office of Vital Statistics, *Vital Statistics of the United States, 1950*, Vol. I, table 5.01; *Monthly Vital Statistics Reports*, Vol. 3, No. 12, p. 1; and U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 59, table 4.

CHAPTER 11

SUMMARY

This study presents an analysis of demographic data on family life in the United States during the 1940's and early 1950's. In this period, household formation took place at an unusually high rate, the proportion of persons married climbed to new heights, the median age at marriage declined more than a year, birth rates rose to the level of a generation ago, and divorce rates fluctuated within a range well above those recorded before 1940. Current family patterns reflect the varying degrees in which these changes occurred in different social groups in the population. This study deals with the nature of these patterns in the light of past changes and with projections of future trends in household formation and family composition.

Numerous factors which affect the patterns of family life are not covered by this study. Such factors as personality adjustment, intellectual capacity, social values, and religious background of marriage partners are often decisive factors in mate selection, in decisions to dissolve or continue a marriage, and in determining size of family and family living arrangements; but nationwide data on these subjects are not available. The present study is concerned, instead, with census data on family characteristics; the scope of such data has broadened considerably in recent years. It has been possible in this study, therefore, to present far more refined data on living arrangements, family composition, and family formation and dissolution, in relation to color, residence, age, education, occupation, and income of the family head, than would have been possible a few years ago.

Most of the statistics used in this monograph were derived from the 1950 and 1940 Censuses or from the Current Population Surveys of the Bureau of the Census for 1944 to 1954. Many of the tables present figures for 1940, 1947, 1950, and 1953 or 1954. The choice of the intercensal year, 1947, was determined by the fact that the Current Population Survey was based on a much larger sample in 1947 than in any other year during the 1940's and the fact that 1947 was the first year after World War II when the number of men returning from the war was relatively small. The most recent date for which figures were shown depended on the availability of information on the subject at the time of this writing. Some of the figures are affected by changes in definitions, as indicated in Appendix A. In addition, since the current survey figures and nearly all of the decennial census figures on family items were based on sample data, they are subject to sampling variability, as indicated in Appendix B. Response variation

may also have affected the results. Despite these limitations, the data are considered useful in the study of recent trends and differential patterns in family behavior among the several social groups.

Household and family composition

Perhaps the word "family" is most often used in referring to a group consisting exclusively of a married couple and their own children living together. But if all the groups of related persons living together and all the persons living apart from relatives were combined into a single total, less than three-tenths of the total in the United States constitute families of this type. One-fourth are married couples without children in the home and still another one-fourth are persons living away from their relatives. Most of the remainder are complex groupings including a married couple or are broken families.

In the present study, the term "family" is used in the same manner as in current census reports to refer to a group of two or more persons residing together who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption; all such persons are considered as members of one family. A household includes all of the persons who occupy a house, an apartment or other group of rooms, or a room that constitutes a dwelling unit. A household usually includes one family but it may include more than one family or none. A married couple, as defined for census purposes, is a married man and his wife living together.

All but 3 or 4 percent of the married couples maintain a home of their own, that is, they either own or rent a home; by contrast, close to half of the persons with broken marriages share the homes of others. Among those with broken marriages, separated persons are the least likely to keep up a home of their own, divorced persons are intermediate in this respect, and widowed persons are most likely to have their own homes. All but 1 or 2 percent of the children (including stepchildren and adopted children) of dependent age live with their parents or other relatives, and nine out of every ten of those living with either parent lived with both parents. About one-half million children under 18 years old live in foster homes or in institutions.

The long-time trend has been toward smaller households, as indicated by the decline in the median size of household from 5.4 in 1790 to 4.5 in 1890, 3.3 in 1940, and 3.1 in 1950. Throughout this long period, the population was increasing at a slower rate than the number of households. Reasons for the decline in household size are numerous and complex. In demographic terms, it resulted largely from the long-time downward trend in the birth rate. With industrialization and urbanization came rising standards of living and changes in attitudes toward having many children. In addition, as death rates fell, more of the couples survived jointly beyond the time when their children left home; this factor, no doubt, also contributed to the increase in the number of small households. Moreover,

since at least as far back as 1910, the trend has been away from having roomers or resident employees in the home, and that has helped to lower the average size of household. Again, the number of young adults in their parental households was reduced by the higher marriage rates, age for age, in the 1940's and early 1950's; by the decline after the peak in 1947 in the doubling rate (that is, in the percent of married couples sharing homes of others); and by the expansion of the Armed Forces. At the same time, relatively large numbers of young adults established small households of their own.

Not until the early 1950's had the baby boom, which started during the war years, lasted long enough to offset entirely the effects of the factors that tended to reduce the average size of household and to bring at least a temporary reversal of the downward trend in the average size of household.

The average size of nonwhite households declined much less between 1930 and 1950 than that of white households, partly because a larger proportion of the nonwhite households are located in rural areas, where the change in household size has been less than in urban areas, and partly because the doubling rate rose among nonwhites but declined among whites between 1940 and 1950. Relatively large proportions of both small and large households have long been characteristic of the nonwhite population.

The average size of household declined in every State in the 1930's and again in the 1940's. The West has consistently had the smallest households and the South, the largest. The range of variation in average size of household has diminished; in 1950, South Carolina had the largest average (4.01 persons) and Nevada the smallest (3.00 persons). If current changes continue, however, it is probable that many, if not most, States will show slight increases in average size of household during the 1950's.

Data collected in the early 1950's throw light on many facets of family composition. About four-tenths of the families (as defined above) have no members under 18 years old in the home and seven-tenths have no members 18 years old and over other than the head and wife. However, all but about one-sixth of the married couples who have reached middle age have had children. Before the parents have passed middle age, most of the children have left home. During the 1940's, the proportion of families with two or three young children in the home went up and the proportion with four or more went down. In the early 1950's, the proportion with four or more children began a mild rise and this trend seems likely to continue during the balance of the 1950's.

Very few families have a combination of young sons and daughters of the head and other young children in the home. When there are family members under 18 years of age other than sons and daughters of the head, the chances are two out of three that there are adult family members other than the head and wife also in the home—usually one or both of the children's parents. Only 6 percent of the households in 1950 contained

any members who were not related to the head. Such members are half again as likely to be found in nonfarm households as in farm households and are most likely to be found in nonwhite nonfarm households.

The life cycle of the family

Between formation and dissolution, families go through a series of characteristic stages which can be analyzed demographically. Because of these changes, "the average family" in the United States as of one point in time is an abstraction. The median age at first marriage in the early 1950's was about 23 years for men and 20 years for women. During the 1940's, these ages had declined more than a year. From 1890 to 1940, the median age at first marriage for men declined about two years and that for women, about one-half year. In 1954, a relatively large proportion of the women with broken marriages had married for the first time when they were in their teens or after they reached their 30's. Nonwhite women had a median age at first marriage about one year lower than that for white women in the early 1940's, after which the difference evidently became smaller. Urban women marry about a year later than rural women, on the average, probably because the former are more likely to work outside the home for a while before marriage.

Close to a fifth of the married couples postpone setting up a separate home during the first year of marriage. By middle age, virtually all couples maintain their own home; thereafter, the doubling rate rises gradually. The doubling rate for couples of all ages rose to an all-time high level in 1947 when the number of marriages was very large and the housing shortage was acute, but the rate had fallen to a record low level (3.5 percent) by 1955.

The most usual time for the birth of the first child is between one year and two and a half years after marriage. It is estimated that under current fertility conditions, a thousand women can be expected to have about 2,800 children during their lifetime. On the average, women currently are most likely to give birth to their last child while they are in their 26th or 27th year of age. They are about six years younger than their grandmothers were, as a rule, at the completion of childbearing.

By the time the last child has left home, the parents are generally close to 50 years old and still have about a third of their married life ahead of them. Since the wife is usually younger and is subject to lower mortality rates than her husband, she is likely to outlive him. Moreover, widows have lower remarriage rates than widowers. Such factors as these account for the fact that widows outnumber widowers more than three to one.

Family composition varies during the life cycle of the family mainly because of the rise and fall in the number of sons and daughters in the home. Young children are most often found in families with the head between 25 and 45 years old. In families with an older head, the proportion of the young family members who are grandchildren or more distant

relatives is greatest. The fact that fewer children were found in this status in 1950 than in 1940 is related to the fact that the doubling rate was lower in 1950. In the earlier stages of the family life cycle, nonwhite families are less likely than white families to have dependent-age children of the head in the home. This fact is related not only to the much greater incidence of doubling-up among nonwhite families but also to their higher rates of broken marriage and to the apparently more frequent placement of their children with relatives.

Families with adult members other than the head and wife tend to be concentrated among those in the later stages of the life cycle. When the head of the family is in his 40's, these adults are generally sons and daughters who have not yet married. Later, they are more often married, widowed, or divorced sons or daughters who have returned to their parental homes to obtain economic support or to help care for their aging parents. The average size of family is consistently the smallest where no young members are present, is considerably larger where young children of the head are present, and is still larger where some of the young family members are relatives other than sons or daughters of the head.

Many changes in the social and economic characteristics of the family occur during the successive stages of the family life cycle. These changes may be inferred from the demographic data classified by age of the family head or wife. Some caution is required, however, in the interpretation of these data. For instance, the larger average amount of education of family heads currently in the earlier stages reflects the rapid improvement in educational level of the population during the last adult generation rather than a typical change during the family life cycle.

The residential mobility rate tends to drop as the age of the head advances, probably because the housing and schooling needs of the family members change most rapidly in the first several years after marriage, and because younger men are less likely to have established permanent job attachments. The cycle of labor force participation of the wife is affected by the changing requirements of child care, but at all ages the proportion of wives in the labor force rose sharply during the 1940's and early 1950's. Because the proportion of women with previous work experience has been increasing, the labor force participation rate for wives during their later years may be expected to rise in the future.

The employment cycle for men usually begins at age 18 and ends at about age 70. The preponderant majority of men under the age of 35 are wage and salary workers but the proportion of workers who are self-employed increases with age. Economic status, as shown by occupation and income data, usually improves during the earlier stages of the husband's working life and declines gradually in the later stages. Occupational shifts before middle age tend to reflect movement from occupations requiring less skill and accumulation of wealth to those requiring more. The husband's income generally rises to a peak during his 30's or 40's and then falls

slightly by the end of middle age. To some extent, the lower status of husbands currently past middle age may reflect the fact that they have less education, on the average, than younger husbands. The average income of the husband in old age is only about half that of the husband with a recently formed family. In close to one-half of the families with two or more earners, the income of the wife is one of the sources (perhaps generally the main source) of difference between the income of the husband and the income of the family. Families with other adult members who contribute to the family income are generally in the later stages of the life cycle.

Only a small minority of the families in the early years after formation have purchased their home but the proportion rises steadily to about three-fourths among families with the head 65 years old and over. Those with lower incomes tend to remain in rented quarters. A peak in the value of owned homes is reached, as a rule, when the head is in his late forties or early fifties. An index of housing quality likewise shows that families are best housed during the same period. There is evidence that relatively few families move to smaller living quarters after their children have grown up and left home.

Marriage and dissolution of marriage

As a result of the marriage boom of the 1940's and early 1950's, the proportion married increased far more, and the proportion single decreased far more, in this short span of time than in the entire half century before 1940. Age for age, the proportion widowed has declined through the decades and the proportion divorced has risen. Moreover, there has been a long-time increase in the amount of remarriage. The number of married couples in 1953 was between 3 and 4 million larger than it would have been if there had been no increase in the percentage married in each age group after 1940. Among persons in their early 20's in 1940, the increase during the ensuing ten years in the proportion married was lowest among those with no high school education and highest among those with a college education. The proportion remarried increased by about the same amount between 1910 and 1950 among white and nonwhite women, but the proportion for nonwhites was still about twice as large as that for whites in 1950.

Age at first marriage is lowest among those who drop out of high school before graduating and highest among college graduates. Women tend to have more education than their husbands if the husband has not graduated from high school and less education than their husbands if the husband has attended college. Age at first marriage tends to be higher for men in the upper occupational and income levels. However, the highest incomes for recently married couples are for those with husbands who enter first marriage in their late 20's. Among women who entered their first marriages between 1950 and 1953, about one-half had some income in 1952 and one out of every five reported incomes of $2,000 or more.

Ages at first marriage tend to be concentrated within the span of a few years but ages at remarriage are much more widely distributed. On the average, husbands in first marriages are about three years older than their wives but those in remarriages are about six years older. In the fairly common situation where the woman is quite young at first marriage, she usually marries a man several years older than herself, whereas in the less common situation where the woman is relatively late in entering first marriage she is more likely to marry a man about her own age. If the husband is under 30 years old at marriage, the average difference between the ages of the spouses is about the same (three years) for both those in first marriages and those in remarriages; for husbands over 30 at marriage, the average difference between the ages of the spouses is likewise about the same (six or seven years) for both those in first marriages and those in remarriages. In both types of marriage, the number of years by which the age of the husband exceeds that of the wife is greater, on the average, for nonwhites than for whites, for farm residents than for nonfarm residents, and for persons with no high school education than for those with a high school or college education. Among the practical implications of these differences between the ages of the husband and wife are their effects on the chances of survival of one spouse or the other and the probabilities that orphaned children will become dependent upon a surviving widow or widower.

Before 1940, the first marriage rate for nonwhite women was evidently somewhat higher than that for white women but by 1950 the reverse was true. The highest first marriage rates among women are those for high school graduates who have not gone on to college; rates standardized for age are lowest for both white and nonwhite college graduates. First marriage rates and remarriage rates for men increase as the amount of their income increases. Marriage rates, age by age, are highest for divorced persons, intermediate for widowed persons, and lowest for single persons. However, about two-thirds of the marriages of divorced and widowed persons occur among those above 30 years of age; marriage rates among single persons in this age range are far below the peak. About 7 or 8 percent of the people never marry. Remarriage rates among women are highest among childless women and lowest among those who have had three or more children; but this relationship is greatly affected by differences in the age distributions of the women. Thus, age by age, the lowest remarriage rates are generally found among women with one or two children.

For divorced persons who remarried during the early 1950's, the median time elapsed between the dissolution of the previous marriage and remarriage was about two and a half years; for widowed persons, however, it was about three and a half years. It is estimated that, under current conditions, close to one out of every five marriages is likely to end in divorce and that about two-thirds of the divorced women and three-fourths of the

divorced men will eventually remarry. (These estimates may be affected, however, by weaknesses in the basic data.) The proportion of widowed persons who eventually remarry is probably much smaller than that of divorced persons.

The tendency for divorced persons to marry divorced persons and for widowed persons to marry widowed persons is substantial but far less marked than the tendency for single persons to marry single persons. In fact, there were more marriages in 1953 of a single person and a divorced person than there were marriages of two divorced persons; and more marriages of a divorced person and a widowed person than marriages of two widowed persons. If a person marries someone of a different marital status from his own, this fact tends to be related to the age at which the couple marries.

About seven out of every eight who remarry are entering their second marriage. Only 2 or 3 percent of all marriages are contracted by persons entering their third or subsequent marriage. Nonwhite persons are evidently more likely than white persons to marry three or more times. Five out of every eight persons who remarry have been divorced but never widowed, one-fourth have been widowed but never divorced, and one-tenth have been both divorced and widowed. The number of times married for recently married persons is highest for those with little educaton, but at least a part of the correlation may be attributed to the relative concentration of persons with little education among older persons; such persons have had a longer time during which to have married more than once or twice.

Among women with broken marriages, the youngest at separation or divorce are those who left high school before graduation. These women are eight or nine years younger at the time when their marriages are broken, on the average, than women college graduates who become separated or divorced. This is about twice the difference between these two groups with respect to age at first marriage; hence, among those whose marriages are broken, college graduates must have remained in their first marriages much longer than persons who dropped out of high school before graduation.

Separation and widowhood rates go down as the amount of education rises, but those with intermediate amounts of education have the highest divorce rate. The separation rate is three or four times as high among nonwhite women as among white women, but the divorce rate among nonwhite women below the level of high school graduation (where most nonwhite women are found) does not differ much from that for white women of the same age and amount of schooling.

For the purpose of this study, the social and economic characteristics of persons with broken marriages are most relevant for those in the age range when remarriage rates are relatively high. Among men in this age range, those with unbroken marriages have more education and income, on the average, than men with broken marriages. Among those with

broken marriages, divorced men have more education and income, on the average, than widowed and separated men. The relatively low income of widowers who have not remarried suggests that mortality rates are highest for those with low economic status and reflects the fact that remarriage rates are highest for those with high economic status. Bachelors in the middle-age range have more education but less income, on the average, than men in broken marriages. On the other hand, spinsters in this age range have both more education and more income, on the average, than women in any other marital status category.

The type of living arrangements adopted by persons with broken marriages is likewise related to the sex, age, and economic status of the person. For example, among divorced men in their 30's and 40's, those who continue to maintain a separate home are most likely to have incomes above average; those who live as lodgers or hotel guests tend to have intermediate incomes; and those who return to their parents' homes usually have the lowest incomes. Women under middle age with broken marriages are most likely to move in with their parents if they had no income during the preceding year. Among older women with broken marriages, those living apart from relatives tend to have the highest incomes. In general, the economic well-being of adults who share the homes of relatives probably depends more on the income of other family members than on their own income.

Future household and family formation

Projections of the number of households in each fifth year from 1960 to 1975 were made by using projections of the population and projections of the proportion of persons with their own household. These household projections are useful in studying potential future household composition and in evaluating future production and marketing levels for those types of goods and services that are usually purchased for the use of the entire household, such as housing, household appliances, automobiles, and utilities. The results indicate that unless unforeseen conditions develop, the annual net increase in the number of households will remain fairly high during the second half of the 1950's but somewhat lower, on the average, than during the first half of the 1950's. In addition, they indicate a mild rise in the annual household gains during the first half of the 1960's, to be followed by a sharp rise during the second half of the 1960's and a rise to a still higher level during the first half of the 1970's.

Much of the increase in the number of households between 1950 and 1955 resulted from the unusually large proportion of young couples who established homes of their own soon after marriage and of older persons who maintained separate homes instead of living with others. The projections indicate that, between 1955 and 1975, much less of the annual growth in the number of households may come from these sources and much more of it may come from an increase in the married population.

Most of the persons born during the 1940's and the early 1950's, when birth rates were high, will be getting married during the 1960's and 1970's. If the downward trend in the number of farm households continues, the increase in the number of nonfarm households will continue to exceed that of total households.

If, as is expected, the rate of growth in the population will exceed the rate of growth in number of households during the balance of the 1950's and possibly until 1965 or even later, the increase in average size of household which began in the early 1950's will continue until 1960 and possibly longer. There is no record of any earlier period, except for a year or two following the end of World War II, when the size of household in the United States increased. If this new trend continues, it will affect the future distribution of family expenditures for housing, schooling, food, etc., and it may increase the focus of family activities around the social life of the children.

Projections of the number of families run parallel, in general, to household projections. However, projections of the number of married couples without their own household indicate prospects of a relatively fast rate of growth in the number of such couples during the 1960's and early 1970's, because of the rapid rate of increase anticipated in the number of married persons in their twenties, who currently account for about 40 percent of the couples who are sharing the homes of others. Also, projections of the number of older persons living alone indicate a rapid increase in this group because of the continued aging of the population. Finally, projections of the number of marriages follow a pattern closely resembling that of the expected number of women 20 to 24 years old. The number of marriages year after year is likely to bear a stable relationship to the increase in the number of households only if other sources of household growth do not undergo a significant change.

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A P P E N D I X   A

SOURCES, DEFINITIONS, AND EXPLANATIONS

Census publications containing family data

Family data from various reports of the Bureau of the Census have been used in this monograph. These data cover dates back to 1790, but few figures are cited for dates earlier than 1940, because of the lack of comparability of many of the earlier figures with current figures and because the statistics for the 1940's and early 1950's were the focus of major interest. The following paragraphs, therefore, do not give an exhaustive list of reports containing census data on family characteristics but rather the principal sources used in developing the tables used here and certain additional reports containing closely related data.

1930 Census of Population. The main source of family data for 1930 is Volume VI, *Families*. Some detailed cross-classifications of family characteristics for 1930 that were not compiled in time to be shown in the reports for 1930 were published in special reports of the 1940 Census, as indicated below.

1940 Census of Population. A series of eight special reports on family characteristics was published on the basis of data from the 1940 Census of Population. The reports in this series that are most closely related to this monograph are entitled *Types of Families* (including tables for 1930), *Size of Family and Age of Head* (including tables for 1930), and *Family Wage and Salary Income in 1939*. Other special reports of the 1940 Census of Population of special interest are those entitled *Employment and Family Characteristics of Women, Women by Number of Children under 5 Years Old, Women by Number of Children Ever Born,* and *Fertility by Duration of Marriage;* the last three reports contain data for 1910 as well as 1940.

1950 Census of Population. Information on households, families, unrelated individuals, marital status, and household relationship are presented in Volume II, *Characteristics of the Population*. Limited data on some of these subjects are also shown in Volume III, *Census Tract Statistics*. Chapter B of Volume II contains data on the numbers of households, families, unrelated individuals, and inmates of institutions, on family income, and on the population by abridged marital status categories for States, standard metropolitan areas, urbanized areas, cities, and counties. In Chapter C of Volume II, cross-classifications of marital status by age,

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relationship to head of household by age, and family status by personal income are shown for States and standard metropolitan areas, and data on marital status by age are also shown for large cities.

Additional statistics on marital status are presented in nearly all of the special reports which constitute Volume IV of the 1950 Census of Population. Detailed cross-classifications of marital status, family status, age, and income are presented in the special report entitled "Marital Status." Data on household relationship are presented in the special report "Employment and Personal Characteristics." Furthermore, statistics on family status are shown in the special report "Characteristics by Size of Place" and in the several reports on "Mobility of the Population." Characteristics of inmates of institutions are presented by type of institution and age in the special report "Institutional Population."

A special report entitled "General Characteristics of Families" includes data on size of family, number of children under 6 and under 18 years old, number of members in the labor force, several characteristics of the head (age, marital status, education, migration, employment status, major occupation group, income, etc.), and age and labor force status of the wife of the head. All of these items are shown for the United States as a whole and some are presented for States, standard metropolitan areas, and large cities.

Another special report entitled "Fertility" presents statistics on women by number of children ever born and by number of children under 5 years old in relation to marital status, duration of marriage, education, husband's major occupation group, etc. Another special report, "Duration of Current Marital Status," shows data on the ever-married female population in each marital status category, by age at which the current marital status was entered and duration of current marital status, cross-classified by social and economic characteristics.

1950 Census of Housing. Data on characteristics of households cross-classified by housing characteristics are shown in the following volumes of the 1950 Census of Housing: Volume I, *General Characteristics,* Volume II, *Nonfarm Housing Characteristics,* and Volume III, *Farm Housing Characteristics.*

Current Population Reports. Each year since 1944, the Bureau of the Census has published data on family characteristics and (except in 1945) on marital status by age derived from the annual family supplement to the Current Population Survey (CPS). This survey is conducted each month by direct interview with a scientifically selected sample of about 25,000 households representing the entire civilian population. (In 1956, the size of the sample was increased to about 35,000 households.) It provides current information on employment, unemployment, and related data each month. At various times during the year, the regular labor force survey is supplemented by additional inquiries that are designed to provide statistics on special problems. Once a year, generally in April, questions relating to family composition and marital status are added to the survey. The statistics provided by this source are, in general, designed

to be comparable with data for the United States obtained in the decennial population censuses. Because of the relatively small size of the CPS sample, it has been possible to make various types of analytical tabulations from the survey which would have been too expensive to have prepared from the decennial censuses.

The Bureau of the Census publishes data on general family characteristics and marital status from the CPS in *Current Population Reports— Population Characteristics*, Series P–20. Data on these subjects are shown in the following Series P–20 reports: No. 67 (1955 and 1954), No. 62 (1955), No. 59 (1947 to 1955), No. 56 (1954), No. 55 (1947 to 1954), Nos. 53 and 50 (1953), No. 44 (1952), No. 38 (1951), Nos. 33 and 32 (1950), No. 26 (1949), Nos. 23 and 21 (1948), Nos. 17, 16, 11, and 10 (1947); in Series P–S, Nos. 13 and 10 (1946); in Series P–46, No. 8 (1945); and in Series P–S, Nos. 3 and 1 (1944). Series P–20, No. 42, presents projections of households and families (1955 and 1960). Another Series P–20 report, in preparation when this monograph went to press, was to present household and family projections for 1960 to 1975. In addition, family statistics in relation to labor force items may be found in selected reports in *Current Population Reports—Labor Force*, Series P–50, and family income statistics may be found in selected reports in *Current Population Reports—Consumer Income*, Series P–60. In making the household and family projections for 1960 to 1975, extensive use was made of population figures from *Current Population Reports—Population Estimates*, Series P–25, No. 78 (1955 to 1975), and No. 98 (1940 to 1950). The reports in Series P–25 are based on independent estimates, whereas those in Series P–20, P–50, and P–60 are generally based on Current Population Survey data.

Family concepts in current usage

With the growth in the number of persons using family statistics came changes in family concepts that were intended to improve the form and content of these statistics. Often the data on subjects like family income and household formation had been inadequate because the units of measurement were ill-defined, lacked differentiation by type, did not account for the total population, or had other faults. After World War II, Census Bureau technicians held numerous conferences with advisory committees representing a variety of interests to develop a new set of family concepts that would overcome as many as possible of these objections. The new concepts were first used experimentally in the Current Population Survey of April 1947 and were officially adopted in 1948. Only a few minor changes have been made since that time.[1]

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[1] Definitions of these and related terms, and comments on the comparability of the terms used in the 1950 Census with those used in earlier censuses and on quality of census data on these subjects, are given in *1950 Census of Population*, Vol. II, *Characteristics of the Population*, Part 1, U. S. Summary, pp. 41–44; and Vol. IV, *Special Reports*, Part 2, Chapter A, General Characteristics of Families, pp. 6–11. Some of the materials from these sources are presented in Appendix B.

Household and quasi household.   The new concepts were fashioned within the framework of the old definitions of a household and a quasi household.   A household is still defined as the entire group of persons who occupy a dwelling unit, and a quasi household is still defined as the entire group of persons who occupy a housing unit not classified as a dwelling unit.   The key expression in these definitions is an "occupied dwelling unit."   This term was defined more precisely in the 1950 Census than in previous censuses.   In 1950, an occupied dwelling unit was defined, in general, as a group of rooms or a single room occupied as separate living quarters by a family or other group of persons living together or by a person living alone.   Specifically, a group of rooms occupied as separate living quarters, was a dwelling unit if it had separate cooking equipment or a separate entrance.

There were about 48 million households in the United States in 1955.[2] These units are of primary concern to housing specialists and marketing analysts.   The latest figures on the number of quasi households are for 1950 when there were 215,000 of these units.

Family and subfamily.   Perhaps the most basic revision made in 1947 was the change in the definition of a family.   Under the old definition, a family comprised the head of a household and all other members of the household related to the head.   Under this definition, a head of a household living alone was counted as a family but a mutually related group of lodgers or resident employees was not counted as a family. Critics of the old family definition maintained that the term "family" should be used only to refer to a group of mutually related persons living together, and they also maintained that every group of mutually related persons living together should be regarded as a family. Furthermore, they proposed that a new concept be used to identify persons not living in family groups.   These views were eventually adopted.

Under the new definition, a family is a group of two or more persons who live together and who are related by blood, marriage, or adoption; all such persons are regarded as members of one family even though they may include a "subfamily."   A subfamily is a married man and his wife with or without children, or one parent and one or more own children under 18 years old, sharing a dwelling unit of a relative who is the household head.   For example, if the occupants of a dwelling unit include two married couples that are related to each other, the four persons are considered as one family.   The couple "living in" constitutes a subfamily; it is only a part or subdivision of a family, according to census usage.

A household usually contains one family, but it may contain more than one family or no family at all.   Thus, if two married couples are not related to each other but occupy a single dwelling unit, the household is classified, for census purposes, as containing two families.   If, however, a widow

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[2] U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P–20, No. 59, table 4.

lives in her home with a maid (who is not related to her), this two-person household is classified as containing no family. In the last example, both the widow and the maid are counted in the category of "unrelated individuals," which is defined below.

Families are classified as "primary" or "secondary" according to their living arrangements. A primary family is defined as a family that contains the head of a household among its members. A secondary family is a family that does not contain a household head among its members. Members of secondary families generally are persons living as lodgers, guests, or resident employees; they may be living either in a household or in a quasi household. By definition, there are no primary families or subfamilies in quasi households and no subfamilies in secondary families.

In 1955, only about 220,000, or one-half of 1 percent, of the 42 million families were secondary families. Thus, almost all of the families were classified as primary families. The number of subfamilies in 1955 was close to 2 million.

Head of a household, family, or subfamily. For each household, family, or subfamily, one person is designated as the head. Generally, the head is the person so reported to the enumerator. Some women living with their husbands report themselves as the head, but the number is extremely small and hence does not justify establishing a separate category; for that reason, the returns are edited to show the husband consistently as the head.

The head, of course, is usually a married man and the chief breadwinner. For several reasons, however, no attempt is made to determine which family member is the chief earner, before deciding which person is to be considered as the head. The most important reasons are that increased complexities in processing the returns—and therefore increased costs— would be involved, and that a classification based on such a principle would in many cases distort the description of the actual living arrangements. The determination of who is returned as the head may depend less on who is the chief earner than on who owns or rents the dwelling unit or on the personal relationships among the household members.

Whether a particular group of persons is or is not classified as a subfamily depends, among other things, on who is classified as the head of the household. Thus, if a daughter and her husband are sharing the home of her mother, there is a subfamily; but if the mother is sharing the home of the married couple, there is no subfamily. In this example, there are three persons in the family regardless of which person is reported as the head, but the sex and age of the family head will differ depending on which person is regarded as the head.

Married couple. According to census usage, a married couple comprises a married man and his wife who are living together, that is, a man and wife who are enumerated as members of the same household or quasi household. The husband may be either the head of a "husband-wife"

family or the head of a "husband-wife" subfamily, depending on the living arrangements. There are always many married persons who do not live with their spouses for one reason or another; for example, the number fluctuates as the Armed Forces are expanded or contracted. (The number of married persons living apart from their spouses can be found in the census data on marital status.) The term "married couple with own household" refers to a couple in which the husband is the head of a household; it does not denote ownership of the home but rather maintenance of an owned or rented home.

Parent-child group. A parent-child group comprises one parent and one or more sons or daughters under 18 years old living together. Common examples include the wife and children of a man who has departed for overseas service, a widow and her children, and a divorced woman and her children. The term, as used here, is limited to instances in which the children are living with only one parent.

Unrelated individual. Persons who are not family members (that is, are not living with any relatives) and who are not "inmates of institutions" are classified as "unrelated individuals." An unrelated individual who maintains a household is referred to as a "primary individual"; he is a household head with no relatives—but in some cases with nonrelatives—in the household. An unrelated individual who does not maintain a household is called a "secondary individual"; he is a roomer, hotel guest, resident employee, etc., with no relatives in the household or quasi household. By definition, there are no primary individuals in quasi households. Widowed landladies in large rooming houses, for instance, are classified as secondary individuals, or as secondary family heads if they have children or other relatives living with them.

In 1955, the Current Population Survey showed that, of the approximately 10 million civilian unrelated individuals, about 6 million were primary individuals, about 3 million were secondary individuals in households, and about 1 million were secondary individuals in quasi households. The number of secondary individuals in quasi households shown by the 1950 Census was about 2 million larger than the number shown by the 1950 Current Population Survey, partly because military personnel in barracks were counted in the census (as secondary individuals) but were not covered by the CPS, and partly because college students away from home were counted in the census at their college residence (usually as secondary individuals), but were counted in the CPS at their parental homes (usually as family members). This difference in coverage and classification seriously affects the comparability of CPS and census data on family status for persons in the young adult age groups.

Inmate of an institution. Inmates of institutions (often referred to as the "institutional population") are persons who are confined for special care or corrective treatment in such places as homes for delinquent or

dependent children, homes and schools for the mentally or physically handicapped, places providing specialized medical care, homes for the aged, prisons, and jails. Resident employees and their family members on institutional grounds are excluded from the count of inmates.

In 1950, the number of inmates of institutions in the United States was about 1.6 million. In the annual family statistics published by the Bureau of the Census, no effort is made to show changes in the size of the institutional population; but the number of inmates (by age and sex) shown by the preceding decennial census is included.

Inmates of institutions are shown in a category separate from unrelated individuals largely because statistics on the latter are more useful in that form. Ordinarily, inmates are not in the labor force, they have little or no income, and they are not in the housing market. Probably the number of married persons residing in institutions with their spouses is extremely small. Mainly to simplify various classifications, these persons are not included in the count of married couples or families.

Comments on selected family concepts

The current family concepts, which were first used by the Bureau of the Census in 1947 and which were still in effect with minor exceptions at the time of this writing, overcame many of the objections to the old concepts. The revised terminology eliminated the anomalous "one-person families" and it provided categories showing the living arrangements of all groups of related persons living together, and of all "unattached" persons. The new definition of a family was simple and several auxiliary concepts were introduced to permit flexibility in identifying various segments of the population. Problems raised in relation to some of the concepts adopted and to other concepts which were not adopted are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Subfamily. When the new concepts were being considered, a great deal of discussion centered around the question of whether the family groups now called "husband-wife subfamilies" should be counted as families. (See definition of subfamily above.) Housing analysts needed a convenient measure of housing shortage. If families were defined to include all heads of households, all secondary families, and also all husband-wife subfamilies, such a measure could be obtained by subtracting the number of households (each of which would include one family or more) from the number of families. These analysts contended that married couples sharing the living quarters of relatives (husband-wife subfamilies) were just as qualified to be called doubled-up families as were married couples sharing the living quarters of nonrelatives (husband-wife secondary families). Furthermore, some income analysts took the position that each married couple should be regarded as a separate income unit and accordingly should be counted as a family.

Another point of view, which prevailed in the end, was supported by some income analysts but mainly by economists who were concerned with the analysis of data on expenditures and savings. Their studies had shown that the finances of two-generation families are generally too intricately interwoven to warrant fractionating them. Further support of this position came from tabulations of 1947 income data, which showed that about two-thirds of the subfamilies were economically dependent upon the remainder of the family, or vice versa, in the sense that one segment or the other had less than $2,000 income. The proportion was even larger for parent-child subfamilies. Again, the viewpoint was expressed that subfamilies do not consistently regard themselves as separate families. This situation was thought to exist, as a rule, when an aged couple, a quite young couple, or a parent-child group is wholly or largely dependent on the relative whose home the subfamily shares. Finally, if subfamilies of any type were segregated from the balance of a family, the residual part would sometimes not meet the proposed definition of a family. For instance, consider a widowed family head, her daughter, and her son-in-law living together. If the daughter and son-in-law were to be regarded as a separate family, the widow would become the residual part and, alone, would not constitute a family because two related persons is a minimum requirement. In 1947, about 500,000 of the residuals consisted of only one person (usually a widow); these persons could not be regarded as unrelated individuals and they could not readily be counted as "other relatives" in the sharing group's "family." Some persons suggested that at least the husband-wife subfamilies should be counted as families when there were two or more related persons in the residual part. Such a complication of the family definition, which was otherwise quite simple, was not regarded as justifiable.

A compromise solution to this controversy was reached by introducing the term "married couple" for use, among other things, in measuring housing shortage. For this purpose, married couples are classified as "with own household" if the husband is the head of a household, or as "without own household" if the couple shares the living quarters of others. Fluctuations in the latter group provide a practical measure of the change in housing pressure. The number of married couples without their own households declined sharply from a high point of about 2.9 million in 1947 to about 1.3 million in 1955.

Spending unit. The concept "spending unit" has been used for about a decade by the Federal Reserve System and is still the basic unit in that agency's annual measurement of liquid assets but has not been used by the Bureau of the Census. A spending unit is defined, in brief, as a group of related persons who live in the same dwelling and pool half or more of their incomes for their major items of expense. The wife of the head or a related member under 18 years old earning less than $15 a week is always

counted as a member of the main spending unit. This concept goes quite far in the direction of breaking apart closely integrated groups. Such a concept, moreover, would require the agency to ask income questions each time it collected family data. (Although this was not a problem in connection with the Surveys of Consumer Finances, it was something the Bureau of the Census wished to avoid.) Furthermore, it would be difficult to make dependable projections of the future numbers of such units. Changes in economic conditions might change the number of spending units without making a comparable change in household composition.

Biological family. When the revision of family terminology was considered, some persons expressed regret that the proposed family concept was not designed to refer to "biological families," or what are sometimes called "nuclear families." These persons argued that the count of families should include two types of groups of persons living together: (1) a married couple with or without children of any age, and (2) one parent with one or more children of any age.[4] From this viewpoint, the proposed family concept was too restricted because it did not count subfamilies as families, and it was too broad because it recognized as families combinations of brothers and sisters, grandparents and grandchildren, and other mutually related groups which involved neither a two-generation family group nor a childless married couple.

One answer to this criticism is that family statistics collected by the Bureau of the Census are generally used in social and economic analyses which relate to living arrangements, dependency, and economic well-being, and that the family concept adopted is better suited to that purpose. In the study of fertility, on the other hand, it is more appropriate, and not uncommon, for a woman and her spouse and children of specified age, if any, to be referred to as a "biological family." The biological family, as a concept for use in studies of family formation and family composition, was rejected in part because it did not satisfy certain accounting needs; it failed to include some types of persons living with relatives as family members. In addition, it would become complex where three generations live together; in this situation, some have suggested that a person in the middle generation should be counted twice—once as a child in relation to the oldest generation and once as a parent in relation to the youngest generation. Aside from other considerations, any approach which involves double counting of some persons and omission of others introduces proc-

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[3] "Survey of Consumer Finances, Part I, Expenditures for Durable Goods and Investments," *Federal Reserve Bulletin*, June 1947; and "1955 Survey of Consumer Finances—Purchases of Durable Goods in 1954," *Federal Reserve Bulletin*, May 1955. A criterion of $10 a week was used in 1947. These surveys are made by the Survey Research Center of the University of Michigan for the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

[4] For an informative discussion of biological families and comparisons of the estimated numbers of these and other types of family groups for selected dates, see W. F. Ogburn and M. F. Nimkoff, *Technology and the Changing Family*, New York, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1955, pp. 100–111.

essing complications and should probably be avoided in census statistics on family composition.

Although the biological family is not among the concepts used by the Bureau of the Census, a close appproximation to the number of such units can be obtained by adding together all married couples and all parent-child groups, regardless of their household or family status. The parent-child groups, however, are limited to those with at least one child under 18 years old and do not include any duplicate counting of persons as both parents and children.

If the concepts relating to families and households seem numerous and complex, it is because the living arrangements of people are correspondingly varied and complicated. In using data in terms of the various types of family and household units which the Bureau identifies, the family analyst may select those data most pertinent to his problem, combine them as necessary, and apply appropriate terms to the new combinations.

Other definitions

Urban and rural residence. The same definition of urban and rural areas was used in the 1950 Census of Population and in the Current Population Surveys since 1951. This definition differs slightly from that used in the March 1950 Current Population Survey, but it is markedly different from that used in earlier surveys and censuses. According to the new definition, the urban population comprises all persons living in (a) places of 2,500 inhabitants or more incorporated as cities, boroughs, towns, and villages; (b) incorporated towns of 2,500 inhabitants or more except in New England, New York, and Wisconsin, where "towns" are simply minor civil divisions of counties; (c) the densely settled urban fringe, including both incorporated and unincorporated areas, around cities of 50,000 or more; and (d) unincorporated places of 2,500 inhabitants or more outside of any urban fringe. The remaining population is classified as rural.

According to the definition used before March 1950, the urban population comprised all persons living in incorporated places of 2,500 inhabitants or more and in areas (usually minor civil divisions) classified as urban under special rules relating to population size and density.

Farm and nonfarm residence. The rural population is subdivided into the rural-farm population, which comprises all rural residents living on farms, and the rural-nonfarm population, which comprises the remaining rural population. The same method of determining farm and nonfarm residence was used in the 1950 Census of Population and in the Current Population Surveys since 1951. This method differs from that used in earlier surveys and censuses in that persons on "farms" who are paying cash rent for their house and yard only are classified as nonfarm; furthermore, persons in institutions, summer camps, "motels," and tourist camps are classified as nonfarm.

Age. The age classification is based on the age of the person at his last birthday as of the date of enumeration, that is, the age of the person in completed years.

Color. The term "color" refers to the division of the population into two groups, white and nonwhite. The group designated as "nonwhite" consists of Negroes, Indians, Japanese, Chinese, and other nonwhite races. Persons of Mexican birth or ancestry who are not definitely Indian or of other nonwhite race are classified as white.

Marital status. The marital status classification refers to the status at the time of enumeration. Persons classified as "married" comprise, therefore, both those who have been married only once and those who remarried after having been widowed or divorced. Persons reported as separated or in common-law marriages are classified as married. Those reported as never married or with annulled marriages are classified as single. Since it is probable that some divorced persons are reported as single, married, or widowed, the reported figures doubtless understate somewhat the actual number of divorced persons who have not remarried.

The category "married" is further divided into "married, spouse present" and "married, spouse absent." A person is classified as "married, spouse present" if the person's husband or wife was reported as a member of the household or quasi household in which the person was enumerated, even though he or she may have been temporarily absent on business or vacation, visiting, in a hospital, etc., at the time of the enumeration.

Persons reported as separated are shown as one subdivision of the group designated as "married, spouse absent." Separated persons include those with legal separations, those living apart with intentions of obtaining a divorce, and other married persons permanently or temporarily estranged from their spouse because of marital discord. The group "other married, spouse absent" includes married persons employed and living for several months at a considerable distance from their homes, those whose spouse was absent in the Armed Forces, in-migrants whose spouse remained in another area, husbands or wives of inmates of institutions, and all other married persons (except those reported as separated) whose place of residence was not the same as that of their spouse. All married inmates of institutions are classified as married, spouse absent, even though this disposition may be contrary to the facts in a few cases.

For comment on the quality of data on marital status in the 1950 Census, see the section on "Definitions and explanations" in the special report "Marital Status," especially tables A to D.

Size of family. The concept "size of family" includes the head of the family and all other persons in the living quarters who are related to the head by blood, marriage, or adoption. A family must comprise at least two persons living together.

Own children. "Own" children in a family is a term used in referring to sons and daughters, including stepchildren and adopted children, of the family head living in the home. The count of own children is limited to single (unmarried) children. In a three-generation family, the determination as to whether there are any young "own" children of the family head depends upon which person in the family is identified as the head; usually a member of the oldest generation is reported as the family head, in which case the children who constitute the youngest generation are recorded as grandchildren of the family head and as "own" children of the subfamily head.

Years of school completed. The data on years of school completed apply only to progress in "regular" schools. Such schools are public, private, or parochial schools, either day or night, full time or part time— that is, those schools where enrollment may lead to an elementary or high school diploma, or to a college, university, or professional school degree. Schooling obtained through a correspondence course is counted only if the course is given by a regular school, such as a university, and the person received credit thereby in the regular school system.

Residence in 1949. Residence in 1949 is defined as the usual place of residence one year prior to the date of the 1950 Census enumeration.

Employed. Employed persons comprise those who, during the survey week, were either (*a*) "at work"—those who did any civilian work for pay or profit or worked without pay for 15 hours or more on a family farm or business or (*b*) "with a job but not at work"—those who did not work and were not looking for work but had a civilian job or business from which they were temporarily absent because of vacation, illness, industrial dispute, bad weather, or layoff with definite instructions to return to work within 30 days of layoff. Also included are persons who had new jobs to which they were scheduled to report within 30 days.

Unemployed. Unemployed persons include those who did not work at all during the survey week and who were looking for work. Also included as unemployed are persons who would have been looking for work except that (*a*) they were temporarily ill, (*b*) they expected to return to a job from which they had been laid off for an indefinite period, or (*c*) they believed no work was available in their line of work or in the community.

Labor force. Persons are classified as in the labor force if they were employed as civilians, unemployed, or in the Armed Forces during the survey week.

Occupation and class of worker. The data on occupation and class of worker refer to the job held during the survey week. Persons employed at two or more jobs were reported in the job at which they worked the greatest number of hours during the week. Persons who were unemployed during the survey week are classified according to their last civilian job. The same major occupation groupings are used in the 1950 Census of Population and in the Current Population Surveys.

The occupational classification system used in 1940 is basically the same as that used in 1950. There are a number of differences, however, in the specific content of particular groups, as well as several differences in title. The occupation data shown for 1940 have not been entirely adjusted for comparability with the 1950 classification system; however, available evidence indicates that the 1940–1950 relationships shown by the data are not significantly affected by these differences.

Income in 1949. Income, as defined in the 1950 Census and in the Current Population Survey, is the sum of money received, less losses, from the following sources: wages or salary; net income (or loss) from the operation of a farm, ranch, business, or profession; net income (or loss) from rents or receipts from roomers or boarders; royalties, interest, dividends, and periodic income from estates and trust funds; pensions; veterans' payments, Armed Forces allotments for dependents, and other governmental payments or assistance; and other income such as contributions for support from persons who are not members of the household, alimony, and periodic receipts from insurance policies or annuities. The figures represent the amount of income received by persons before deductions for personal income taxes, social security, bond purchases, union dues, etc.

Receipts from the following sources are not included as income: money received from the sale of property unless the recipient was engaged in the business of selling such property; the value of income "in kind," such as food produced and consumed in the home and free living quarters; withdrawals of bank deposits; money borrowed; tax refunds; gifts; and lump-sum inheritance or insurance payments.

Medians. The median is the amount that divides a distribution into two equal groups, one being above the median and the other below.

Percentages. Percentages are shown as calculated; therefore, they do not always add to exactly 100.0 percent. The totals, however, are always shown as 100.0 percent.

APPENDIX B

COMPARABILITY AND RELIABILITY OF
CENSUS FAMILY DATA

Comparability of the data

Population reports for each census since 1850 contain figures on the number of households, but some of the earlier census figures are limited to the free population and have other limitations. A few household characteristics for 1790 were tabulated for the free population in those areas with census records still in existence a century later and the results were reported in Chapter VIII of *A Century of Population Growth in the United States, 1790–1900*, Government Printing Office, Washington, 1909. Beginning with 1890, the first data on marital status and more usable household data in varying degrees of detail were published. The general pattern of household and family statistics currently collected was established with the publication of data for 1930.

The numbers of households shown in census reports for 1850 to 1890 and for 1910 and 1920 include quasi households, whereas the numbers for 1900 and for 1930 and subsequent dates exclude quasi households. Since the revision of family concepts in 1947 (Appendix A), statistics on "households" have been comparable, in general, with statistics on "families" and "private households" shown in earlier reports.

Minor changes in the instructions for identifying dwelling units in 1950 as compared with 1940 may have affected to a slight extent the increase in households between the two dates. For example, in the 1940 Census, the occupants of a lodginghouse were regarded as constituting a quasi household if the place included 11 lodgers or more; in the 1950 Census, the criterion was reduced to 5 lodgers or more. Mainly as a consequence of this change, the number of quasi households shown for 1950 was 215,030 as compared with 80,122 for 1940. In the 1950 Census, the number of households and the number of occupied dwelling units were identical by definition; small differences between these numbers appear in the published reports, however, because data for the population and housing reports were processed independently.

Current Population Survey data. Estimates of the numbers of households, families, and unrelated individuals for the United States as a whole are published annually from the Current Population Survey. The estimates based on this survey for March 1950 differed somewhat from

corresponding figures from the census. For households, the census figure based on the complete count is 42,857,335 and that based on the 1 1/9-percent sample is 42,286,230, whereas the survey estimate, as revised, is 43,554,000. For families the census figure based on the 20-percent sample data was 38,310,980, that based on Sample F is 38,453,391, and that based on the 1 1/9-percent sample is 38,088,540, whereas the survey estimate, as revised, is 39,303,000. For both households and families, the differences among the figures from the census were smaller than the differences between the survey figures and the census figures; the differences between the survey and census figures were too great to be attributed to sampling variation alone. Such factors as the methods used in weighting the survey estimates and the differences between the training and experience of the interviewers used in the survey and in the census may also account in part for the lack of agreement in the two sets of data. (See also section below on "Post-Enumeration Survey.")

The factors just mentioned also affect the comparability of the figures on the number of unrelated individuals obtained from the census and from the Current Population Survey. The census figure for the number of primary individuals based on the 1 1/9-percent sample is 4,827,420 and the revised figure based on the survey is 4,716,000. The difference is much greater among secondary individuals 14 years old and over, for whom the 1 1/9-percent sample figure is 6,136,290, as compared with the revised survey figure of 4,279,000. In this case, the difference is in part a reflection of the fact that, unlike the census, the survey excluded from its coverage all members of the Armed Forces living in barracks; the Armed Forces members excluded from the survey were classified as secondary individuals in the census. Moreover, college students were generally enumerated at their own homes in the Current Population Survey and classified as family members, but were enumerated at their college residence in the census, usually as secondary individuals. The difference in coverage of the Armed Forces and college students may account for about 1,250,000 of the total difference in the number of secondary individuals.

Data available from a sample of persons included in both the 1950 Census of Population and the Current Population Survey for April 1950 indicate that the survey enumerators classified as heads of households some persons whom census enumerators classified as other types of household members, generally as lodgers; most lodgers are secondary individuals. This fact suggests that, when complex living arrangements were encountered, survey enumerators more often than census enumerators identified as separate households a person or group of persons occupying only a part of the living quarters in a house or apartment. The Current Population Survey enumerators were more experienced and better trained, and were probably able to adhere more closely to the household definition in such cases. Furthermore, the Current Population Survey enumerators were paid on an hourly basis, whereas the 1950 Census enumerators were paid

on a piece-rate system; this difference in method of payment may have encouraged the survey enumerators to take more time to make a proper determination of the dividing line between households. The fact that the number of households reported in the Current Population Survey is closer to the Post-Enumeration Survey estimate than any of the 1950 Census estimates, as indicated in the next section, suggests that the factors just mentioned more than compensated for the sampling variability and processing problems in the Current Population Survey.

Post-Enumeration Survey. The Post-Enumeration Survey of the 1950 Census studied to some extent the accuracy of census data on the number of households and on relationship to head of household. This survey was a sample re-enumeration which entailed a direct check on a case-by-case basis of the original enumeration.

The results of the survey show that some households were erroneously omitted from the census count, whereas others were included that should not have been. On balance, the data indicate a net undercount of about a million households, or 2.5 percent, in the 1950 Census. This estimate is subject to a standard error of about 90,000 households. It represents the difference between an estimated 1,300,000 households missed in the census or erroneously enumerated as a part of another household and an estimated 300,000 households included in the census by mistake or erroneously enumerated as separate households.

Households are more likely to be "erroneously enumerated" when living arrangements are complex and there is difficulty in identifying the proper number of households. For example, two married couples occupying a given set of living quarters may have been erroneously counted as one household whereas the circumstances were such that they should have been counted as two households; or they may have been erroneously counted as two households instead of one. Errors of this type do not necessarily affect the count of persons; in part for this reason, and in part because households missed in the census tend to be relatively small, the Post-Enumeration Survey indicates that the net undercount of population (1.4 percent) is less than the undercount of households (2.5 percent).

Besides the difficulty in identifying the proper number of households, other factors influencing the count of households include errors in the classification of dwelling units as vacant, as occupied by nonresidents, or as occupied by residents; enumeration of households in the wrong enumeration district; duplicate enumeration of households; and failure to enumerate households.

Furthermore, an analysis of the data from the Post-Enumeration Survey on the accuracy of the census enumeration by relationship to head of household indicates a greater tendency for census enumerators to miss household members in the categories "lodger" and "resident employee" than those who are household heads or relatives of heads.

Additional information from the Post-Enumeration Survey on census enumeration errors is given on pp. XIII and XIV of Volume I and in Part 1 of Volume II of the 1950 Census of Population. A discussion of the completeness of enumeration of occupied dwelling units (same as number of households) is given in the United States Summary of Volume I of the 1950 Census of Housing; this source also contains a statement on the difference between the completeness of the count of occupied dwelling units and of the count of population. A more detailed account of the methods and results of the Post-Enumeration Survey will be given in a forthcoming census monograph.

Reliability of the data

Almost all of the census figures presented in this study are based on sample data and are, therefore, subject to sampling variability. The sampling variability of an estimated percentage depends on both the size of the percentage and the size of the total on which it is based.

Current Population Survey. Estimates based on Current Population Survey (CPS) totals of selected sizes for the United States in April 1953 are subject to sampling variability that can be determined from the standard errors shown in tables B–1 and B–2. Estimated percentages based on urban and rural residence and nonwhite distributions are subject to somewhat greater sampling variability than that shown in this table.

TABLE **B–1.**—STANDARD ERROR OF ESTIMATED NUMBER: APRIL 1953
CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY

[Range of 2 chances out of 3]

Estimated number	Standard error	Estimated number	Standard error	Estimated number	Standard error
10,000	6,000	500,000	39,000	10,000,000	165,000
50,000	12,000	1,000,000	55,000	20,000,000	225,000
100,000	17,000	3,000,000	95,000	40,000,000	280,000
300,000	30,000	5,000,000	120,000		

TABLE **B–2.**—STANDARD ERROR OF ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE: APRIL 1953
CURRENT POPULATION SURVEY

[Range of 2 chances out of 3]

Estimated percentage	Base of percentage							
	500,000	1,000,000	2,000,000	3,000,000	5,000,000	10,000,000	20,000,000	40,000,000
2 or 98	1.1	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.2	0.1
5 or 95	1.7	1.2	0.8	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.3	0.2
10 or 90	2.3	1.7	1.2	1.0	0.7	0.5	0.4	0.3
25 or 75	3.4	2.4	1.7	1.4	1.1	0.8	0.5	0.4
50	3.9	2.7	2.0	1.6	1.2	0.9	0.6	0.4

The standard error is a measure of sampling variability. The chances are about 2 out of 3 that the difference due to sampling variability between

an estimate and the figure that would have been obtained from a complete count of the population is less than the standard error. The amount by which the standard error must be multiplied to obtain other odds deemed more appropriate can be found in most statistical textbooks. For example, the chances are about 19 out of 20 that the difference is less than twice the standard error, and 99 out of 100 that it is less than two and one-half times the standard error.

The sampling variability of a difference between two estimates depends upon the sampling variability of each of the estimates and the correlation between them.

For statements on the sampling variability of Current Population Survey estimates for other years, see the reports in the P–20 series.

In addition to sampling variation, the figures are subject to errors of response and nonreporting, but the possible effect of such errors is not included in the above measures of reliability.

1950 Census of Population. The 1950 Census data in this study derived from Volume II, *Characteristics of the Population,* are almost all based on a 20-percent sample of the population, whereas the data derived from Volume IV, *Special Reports*, are based on smaller samples. The data in the special report, "General Characteristics of Families," on family composition are based on Sample F, which varied in size in different parts of the country, with an average sampling rate of about 2.4 percent; those on characteristics of family heads are based on an approximately systematic sample of about 1 1/9 percent. The data in the special report, "Marital Status," were based on a 3 1/3-percent sample. Those in the special report, "Duration of Current Marital Status," are based on tabulations of Sample C; statistics for women married once and husband present are based on a 1-percent subsample and those for women in all other marital status categories are based on the entire sample of about 2.4 percent.

Tables showing standard errors for numbers and percentages based on these several samples are given in the reports mentioned. To illustrate the magnitudes of the sampling errors, the figures applicable to data from the 3 1/3-percent sample are presented in tables B–3 and B–4. For data based on a 20-percent sample, the sampling errors are smaller than those given in the tables and for data based on samples below the level of 3 1/3-percent, the sampling errors are larger than those given.

Reliability of medians. Some of the tables based on sample data present medians as well as the corresponding distributions. The sampling variability of medians depends on the distribution upon which the medians are based. The standard error of a median based on sample data may be estimated as follows: If the estimated total number reporting the characteristic is N, compute the number $N/2 - \sqrt{N}$. Cumulate the frequencies in the table until the class interval that contains this number is located. By linear interpolation, obtain the value below which $N/2 - \sqrt{N}$ cases

lie.   In a similar manner, obtain the value below which $N/2 + \sqrt{N}$ cases lie.   If information on the characteristics had been obtained from the total population, the chances are about 2 out of 3 that the median would lie between these two values.   The chances will be about 19 out of 20 that the median will be in the interval computed similarly but using $\dfrac{N}{2} \pm 2\sqrt{N}$ and about 99 in 100 that it will be in the interval obtained by using $\dfrac{N}{2} \pm 2.5\sqrt{N}$.

TABLE **B–3.**—STANDARD ERROR OF ESTIMATED NUMBER FOR 3 1/3-PERCENT SAMPLE DATA: 1950 CENSUS

[Range of 2 chances out of 3]

Estimated number	Residence class of estimate		Estimated number	Residence class of estimate	
	United States, urban, and rural nonfarm	Rural farm		United States, urban, and rural nonfarm	Rural farm
100.................	60	60	500,000.............	3,930	3,920
500.................	120	120	1,000,000...........	5,550	5,520
1,000...............	180	180	5,000,000...........	12,240	11,870
2,500...............	280	280	10,000,000..........	17,020	15,920
5,000...............	390	390	15,000,000..........	20,480	18,360
7,500...............	480	480	25,000,000..........	25,460	...
10,000..............	560	560	50,000,000..........	32,290	...
25,000..............	880	880	75,000,000..........	34,280	...
50,000..............	1,240	1,240	100,000,000.........	32,500	...
100,000.............	1,760	1,760	110,000,000.........	30,610	...

TABLE **B–4.**—STANDARD ERROR OF ESTIMATED PERCENTAGE FOR 3 1/3-PERCENT SAMPLE DATA: 1950 CENSUS

[Range of 2 chances out of 3]

Estimated percentage	Base of percentage							
	3,000	5,000	10,000	25,000	50,000	100,000	500,000	5,000,000
2 or 98...................	1.4	1.1	1.0	0.5	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.0
5 or 95...................	2.2	1.7	1.2	0.8	0.5	0.4	0.2	0.1
10 or 90..................	3.0	2.4	1.7	1.1	0.7	0.5	0.2	0.1
25 or 75..................	4.4	3.4	2.4	1.5	1.1	0.8	0.3	0.1
50........................	5.1	3.9	2.8	1.8	1.2	0.9	0.4	0.1

APPENDIX C

TECHNICAL NOTE ON HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY PROJECTIONS

Methodological considerations

The underlying assumptions and some of the implications of the household, family, and marriage projections have been presented in the chapters on "Future household formation" and "Future family formation." In general, the Series A projections imply a continuation of changes in family status by age between 1947 and 1954, but at a diminished rate until 1960, after which it is assumed that there will be no further change. The Series B projections imply a continuation of the 1954 family status patterns without change. The term "family status" is used here to refer to the classification of persons according to their living arrangements, such as primary family heads, primary individuals, secondary family heads, subfamily heads, etc.

In this appendix the first exhibit, table C–1, illustrates for two widely separated age groups the several steps that were used in preparing the Series A and Series B household projections for 1960. Analogous steps were used in obtaining projections for other age groups and for other years. Examination of the steps reveals that the initial goal was the separate projection of five basic types of households: husband-wife primary families (step 8), primary families with a female head (step 14), female primary individuals (step 16), other primary families with a male head (step 27), and male primary individuals (step 29). (In projecting the number of husband-wife primary families, data for wives of heads were used because the base figures (1947 to 1954) for females did not fluctuate according to the size of the Armed Forces.) Summing the figures for these five types yielded the total number of households with heads or wives of heads of households in the specified age groups (step 30). Summing for all age groups yielded the total number of households.

One advantage of developing these several subdivisions was the ability to trace separately the changes in each household type and age group. Often changes indicated for one type are associated with changes in the opposite direction for another type. Another advantage, of course, is that it provides a sounder basis for interpreting over-all changes in the number of households.

Table C-1.—Illustrative Example of Steps Involved in Preparing Series A and B Household Projections for 1960

Step	20 to 24 years		55 to 64 years	
	Series A	Series B	Series A	Series B
WOMEN				
1. Population in 1960 (Series A projections)...............	5,585,000	5,585,000	8,164,000	8,164,000
2. Percent single in 1960 (projected)......................	28.4	30.7	5.1	5.9
3. Single population (1x2).................................	1,586,000	1,715,000	416,000	482,000
4. Ever-married population (1-3)..........................	3,999,000	3,870,000	7,748,000	7,682,000
5. Percent married, husband present, among ever married (projected)...	86.8	86.8	66.7	67.1
6. Population married, husband present (4x5)..............	3,471,000	3,359,000	5,168,000	5,155,000
7. Percent wives of heads of primary families among married, husband present (projected)..........................	95.8	91.2	97.8	97.6
8. Wives of heads of primary families (6x7)..............	3,325,000	3,063,000	5,054,000	5,031,000
9. Population not "married, husband present" (1-6)...........	2,114,000	2,226,000	2,996,000	3,009,000
10. Percent inmates among population not "married, husband present" in 1954..	1.0	1.0	3.6	3.6
11. Inmates of institutions (9x10).........................	21,000	22,000	108,000	108,000
12. Noninmates, not "married, husband present" (9-11).........	2,093,000	2,204,000	2,888,000	2,901,000
13. Percent heads of primary families among noninmates not "married, husband present" (projected)...............	6.4	4.8	25.7	27.9
14. Female heads of primary families (12x13).................	134,000	106,000	742,000	809,000
15. Percent primary individuals among noninmates not "married, husband present" (projected)......................	9.1	6.9	42.6	37.3
16. Female primary individuals (12x15).......................	190,000	152,000	1,230,000	1,082,000
MEN				
17. Population in 1960 (Series A projections)................	5,697,000	5,697,000	7,517,000	7,517,000
18. Armed Forces not covered in Current Population Survey in 1954...	327,000	327,000	104,000	104,000
19. Population in 1960 on CPS basis (17-18)....................	5,370,000	5,370,000	7,413,000	7,413,000
20. Percent married, wife present (projected).................	46.7	42.8	78.7	78.4
21. Population married, wife present (19x20).................	2,508,000	2,298,000	5,834,000	5,812,000
22. Population not "married, wife present" (19-21)............	2,862,000	3,072,000	1,579,000	1,601,000
23. Percent inmates among population, not "married, wife present" in 1954 (projected).........................	4.0	4.0	7.8	7.8
24. Inmates of institutions (22x23)........................	114,000	123,000	123,000	125,000
25. Noninmates not "married, wife present" (22-24)............	2,748,000	2,949,000	1,456,000	1,476,000
26. Percent heads of primary families among noninmates not "married, wife present" (projected)......................	0.9	0.9	20.2	21.0
27. Male heads of primary families (25x26)....................	25,000	27,000	294,000	310,000
28. Percent primary individuals among noninmates not "married, wife present" (projected)......................	5.2	3.7	26.4	25.6
29. Male primary individuals (25x28).........................	143,000	109,000	384,000	378,000
SUMMARY				
30. Projected number of households in 1960 with heads or wives of heads of specified ages (8+14+16+27+29)...............	3,817,000	3,457,000	7,704,000	7,610,000

Source: Derived from U. S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Reports*, Series P-20, No. 10, table 5; No. 16, tables 2 and 5; No. 17, table 1; No. 55, tables 1 and 4 to 7; No. 56, tables 1 and 2; and Series P-25, No. 78, tables 2 and 3.

Analogous steps were employed in projecting other types of family units. Projections of total families involved the projection of numbers of primary and secondary families and adding the results for the two types.   Since the primary families were obtained in the process of getting the projected number of households, the task remained to project the number of secondary families.   This was done by adding steps for secondary families parallel to steps 8, 14, and 27 in table C-1 for primary families.   Likewise, the number of subfamilies was obtained by adding steps for subfamilies parallel to these same three steps.   Finally, the number of secondary individuals was obtained by adding steps parallel to steps 16 and 29 for

primary individuals. Persons still remaining in the population after those identified above had been excluded constituted "other family members." The extent to which this last group increased through time at a greater or lesser rate than the number of families determined the change in average size of family. Thus, if the number of families (that is, the number of heads of families) increased 10 percent in a given period, whereas the number of "other family members" increased 5 percent, the average size of family would show a decline for the period.

In projecting changing proportions of persons in a given family status category for use in the Series A projections, it was considered advisable to deviate in a few instances from the general assumption that the amount of change between 1954 and 1960 would be one-half as great as the change between 1947 and 1954. One important instance was the assumption of one-fourth, rather than one-half, as much change from 1954 to 1960 as from 1947 to 1954 in the percent of married couples with their own households. Rigid acceptance of the "one-half rule" would have yielded an impossibility for one age group—more than 100 percent of those age 20 to 24 years with their own households. Other means, including the use of ratios of change rather than absolute amounts of change, could have been used, of course, but the end result probably would have been about the same.

Another deviation was made in projecting the percent married and husband present among ever-married women under age 25 years. The substantial decline observed between 1947 and 1954 was attributable almost entirely to the fact that the Armed Forces had been greatly expanded during the 1950's; and, since it was assumed that there would be no further change in the Armed Forces after 1954, the percent married and husband present for the age groups under 25 was held constant after 1954 for Series A (as well as Series B) projections. These and one or two other minor deviations from the general rules set up for the Series A projections were made because it was reasonable to do so; in such a situation, the alternative of making an occasional compromise with the rule seemed preferable to applying the rule rigidly with meaningless results.

In table C–1, figures were shown for only two age groups for 1960, because of space limitations. Similar figures were derived for all age groups (14 to 19, 20 to 24, 25 to 34, 35 to 44, 45 to 54, 55 to 64, and 65 and over) for 1960, 1965, 1970, and 1975. In table C–2, the age distributions are shown in percentage form for the five types of households for 1960 and 1975, with corresponding figures for 1947 and 1954 for comparison. The results for Series B reflect the general aging of the population and the effects of changing numbers of births in past years. Those for Series A reflect, in addition, the effects of the assumption of changing proportions of persons in the various family status categories by age.

TABLE C-2.—PERCENT DISTRIBUTION OF HOUSEHOLDS BY AGE OF HEAD (OR WIFE OF HEAD): 1947, 1954, AND PROJECTIONS, 1960 AND 1975

[Percent not shown where less than 0.1]

Date, series, and type of household	All ages	Age of head (or wife of head)--years[1]						
		Under 20	20 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 44	45 to 54	55 to 64	65 and over
HUSBAND-WIFE PRIMARY FAMILIES[1]								
April 1947....................	100.0	1.3	8.4	26.8	25.7	19.8	12.5	5.5
April 1954....................	100.0	1.4	8.3	26.8	25.2	19.0	12.4	6.9
July 1960: Series A.........	100.0	1.7	8.6	23.6	24.6	20.4	13.1	7.9
Series B.........	100.0	1.6	8.1	23.5	25.1	20.7	13.3	7.7
July 1975: Series A.........	100.0	2.0	11.8	26.1	18.3	18.7	14.0	9.0
Series B.........	100.0	1.9	11.1	26.1	18.8	19.1	14.3	8.8
OTHER PRIMARY FAMILIES WITH MALE HEAD								
April 1947....................	100.0	0.4	2.3	11.9	15.3	19.5	21.4	29.2
April 1954....................	100.0	0.2	1.5	14.3	18.0	16.8	22.1	27.1
July 1960: Series A.........	100.0	0.1	2.0	12.8	19.6	16.1	23.5	25.9
Series B.........	100.0	0.2	2.0	11.4	17.8	17.6	22.4	28.6
July 1975: Series A.........	100.0	0.1	2.9	15.7	15.5	14.9	24.3	26.7
Series B.........	100.0	0.2	2.8	13.9	14.1	16.2	23.2	29.5
PRIMARY FAMILIES WITH FEMALE HEAD								
April 1947....................	100.0	0.3	1.3	11.0	18.4	24.7	21.1	23.3
April 1954....................	100.0	0.2	2.7	12.9	20.7	21.4	19.1	22.9
July 1960: Series A.........	100.0	...	3.3	12.5	23.4	20.6	18.2	22.1
Series B.........	100.0	0.3	2.5	10.7	21.2	22.0	19.2	24.1
July 1975: Series A.........	100.0	...	4.5	13.9	17.5	19.1	19.7	25.3
Series B.........	100.0	0.4	3.4	11.9	15.8	20.2	20.7	27.5
MALE PRIMARY INDIVIDUALS								
April 1947....................	100.0	0.5	2.0	7.7	11.8	18.5	24.0	35.5
April 1954....................	100.0	0.5	4.1	12.9	12.3	17.4	18.8	34.0
July 1960: Series A.........	100.0	0.4	6.5	11.2	12.3	18.2	17.5	33.8
Series B.........	100.0	0.4	5.4	10.1	12.0	18.0	18.7	35.4
July 1975: Series A.........	100.0	0.4	9.1	13.3	9.5	16.4	17.5	33.9
Series B.........	100.0	0.4	7.6	12.1	9.3	16.3	18.8	35.6
FEMALE PRIMARY INDIVIDUALS								
April 1947....................	100.0	1.8	2.8	6.3	9.7	16.2	25.5	37.7
April 1954....................	100.0	1.1	3.7	6.2	9.4	17.4	23.9	38.4
July 1960: Series A.........	100.0	1.2	3.6	5.3	9.7	18.2	23.4	38.6
Series B.........	100.0	1.2	3.3	5.1	9.4	17.6	23.6	39.8
July 1975: Series A.........	100.0	1.3	4.7	5.6	6.9	15.9	23.8	41.8
Series B.........	100.0	1.3	4.3	5.3	6.7	15.3	24.0	43.0

[1] Age distributions for husband-wife primary families relate to age of wife of head.

Source: Same as table C-1.

The final exhibit, table C-3, demonstrates that essentially the same figures for the projected number of households by type were obtained for 1960 and 1975 by a simplified method as were obtained by the detailed method outlined in table C-1. In the simplified method, the basic assumptions for Series A and Series B projections were the same as those used in the detailed method, but several intermediate steps were omitted. For example, in the simplified projections according to Series B, the percent of females within each age group who were wives of heads of primary families in 1954 was applied to the projected population in 1960 and 1975, without going through preliminary steps 2 to 6 in table C-1. Similarly,

in the simplified projection according to Series A, the projected percent of females classified as wives of heads of primary families (assuming one-fourth the 1947–1954 change as in the detailed method) was applied to the projected population. For the four types of households other than husband-wife primary families, the projected percentages used for Series A involved the assumption of half the 1947–1954 change. The projected population for males was adjusted to exclude those away from home in the Armed Forces, as in the detailed method.

TABLE C–3.—NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLDS PROJECTED BY SIMPLIFIED AND DETAILED METHODS: 1960 AND 1975

Year and type of household	Series A			Series B		
	Simplified method	Detailed method	Differ-ence[1]	Simplified method	Detailed method	Differ-ence[1]
1960						
All households.......	51,320,000	51,379,000	-59,000	50,126,000	50,070,000	56,000
Primary families:						
Husband-wife.............	38,675,000	38,596,000	79,000	38,041,000	37,880,000	161,000
Other male head..........	1,246,000	1,253,000	-7,000	1,389,000	1,383,000	6,000
Female head..............	3,955,000	4,076,000	-121,000	4,137,000	4,203,000	-66,000
Primary individuals:						
Male.....................	2,223,000	2,195,000	28,000	2,012,000	2,022,000	-10,000
Female...................	5,221,000	5,259,000	-38,000	4,547,000	4,582,000	-35,000
1975						
All households.......	62,861,000	62,986,000	-125,000	61,203,000	61,190,000	13,000
Primary families:						
Husband-wife.............	47,104,000	47,113,000	-9,000	46,217,000	46,068,000	149,000
Other male head..........	1,486,000	1,492,000	-6,000	1,657,000	1,650,000	7,000
Female head..............	4,814,000	4,936,000	-122,000	5,015,000	5,112,000	-97,000
Primary individuals:						
Male.....................	2,740,000	2,697,000	43,000	2,460,000	2,472,000	-12,000
Female...................	6,717,000	6,748,000	-31,000	5,854,000	5,888,000	-34,000

[1] Minus sign (−) denotes fewer households by the simplified method.

Source: Same as table C–1.

The differences between the results obtained by using the detailed and simplified methods are sufficiently small to lend encouragement to research workers to explore the possibility of making more extensive use of simplified methods. If the projections imply no change in household formation rates, as in Series B, the simplified procedure is recommended. The smallness of the differences for the Series A projections, however, stems in part from the prior knowledge gained from the preparation of the type of detail shown in table C–1. Thus, it was only because of the detailed subclassification of data that it became known that an assumption of a further rise half as large as the 1947–1954 increase in percent of females classified as wives of primary family heads was unreasonable. If the same assumptions had been made for this major class of households as for the other classes, as very likely would have been done in the absence of table C–1, the total number of households projected for 1960 according to Series A would have been about 850,000 larger than that shown in the first column of table C–3 and the number for 1975 would have been about 1.2

million larger. These differences are important. Furthermore, the simplified method does not permit the control of other variables of importance, such as the implied change in the proportion of females remaining single in each age group.

In conclusion, if rough indications of the future numbers of households will suffice for the immediate purposes, the simplified approach described above may be quite adequate, but such an approach should always be used with a realization of its more numerous limitations when changing patterns of household formation are assumed. Although the same types of limitations are not inherent in the simplified Series B projections (or in even cruder projections of current ratios of household heads to total population by age and sex), these types of projections are subject to the limitation that they make no allowance for past trends in family status.

Approximate nature of the projections

Any attempt at projecting demographic or economic trends is subject to limitations because, by their very nature, they involve the judgment of one person or a group of persons and that judgment may be faulty. The projections are often obtained in such a way that the contribution of different components can be evaluated. Some components used in projections, such as death rates used in population projections, may tend to change relatively little from year to year and almost always in one direction. Future values for these components are subject to a minimum of error. Fertility rates for future years, however, have a wide range of probable values and have at least temporarily discontinued their historical downward trend. As pointed out elsewhere, however, the projections of households and families make use of projections of the adult population only; hence, the shortcomings of fertility assumptions involving births for as long as two decades into the future have relatively little impact on the household and family projections.

The various assumptions made regarding the future family status of persons are arbitrary, but in each case can be demonstrated to have a reasonable probability of achievement. Although two carefully selected levels of household and family projections are presented, for illustrative purposes, the number of alternative levels could have been increased in numerous ways. Using the same general approach as that described above, a variety of different assumptions could have been made with regard to the future changes in family status, in population growth, or in both. Some additional variations in the assumptions were made after the projections in Chapters 9 and 10 were prepared and the resulting projections were published by the Bureau of the Census in Series P–20, No. 69, after this monograph went to press.

Entirely different methodologies could be devised, involving assumptions about changes in the population (of all ages or of adult ages) per household, the numbers of marriages, the amount of available housing, etc.

Certainly the resulting projections would differ from those presented here. None of these alternative approaches was actually developed in connection with the present study, although the projection of the number of marriages was an important feature of the earliest household projections made by the Bureau of the Census.

Another respect in which the household and family formation figures presented here are approximate is the fact that they are consistent with statistics obtained from the Current Population Survey but not with the 1950 Census. (See Appendix B.) Faced with a choice of using either the survey or the census level of households as a point of departure for the household projections, the former was chosen for several reasons. In the first place, it was believed that the figures were based on superior enumeration; in the second place, it was more feasible to do so on account of the availability of a series of annual figures from the Current Population Survey; and, in the third place, the criterion against which the projections would be measured for the next several years would be the future results of the Current Population Survey. Since one of the more important uses of the projections is to indicate the probable future increments of households over periods of time, the general level of the series is less important for this purpose than the amount of change from one time to another (usually measured in groups of years).

One unresolved problem in this connection is the appropriate level of household figures to use in presenting a consistent series of such figures for a long period into the past. Only since 1946 has the number of households been obtained directly from the Current Population Survey. Although some estimates of the numbers of family units of various types, using the new definitions, have been prepared for 1940 and earlier census dates, none of these estimates includes an allowance for the difference in level of survey and census figures observed in 1950. Whether a similar difference would have been shown in 1940 and earlier years, if data from both sources had been available, can only be speculated upon. On the assumption that figures from both sources will become available for 1960, a comparison of the information for 1950 and 1960 should show whether a reasonable basis exists for revising the household figures for 1940 and earlier census dates, to bring them into closer agreement with the Current Population Survey figures.

Because of the approximate nature of the projections and cost considerations, figures for future years were prepared only for years ending in "0" or "5." Projections for individual years may be obtained by the use of linear interpolation.

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